

ISSUE 3
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THE WIRE

85p

JAZZ, IMPROVISED MUSIC AND.....

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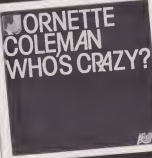
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THE WIRE

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QUESTIONING THE UNQUESTIONED

THE SIGHT and sound of jazz every Friday on Channel Four over the weeks has been heartening to say the least. With the addition of various other programmes such as Russell Davies' excellent profile on Duke Ellington, George Melly's entertaining look at jazz juke-boxes and the more recent tribute to Eubie Blake, it would appear that jazz has belatedly been acknowledged by the small screen as a credible medium for mass exposure. Likewise, other media forces seem to be exercising the big push.

Jazz is hip (again), jazz is trendy and is a saleable commodity in the consumer market-place. Record companies are failing

over themselves to release huge numbers of albums. Re-issues of recordings unobtainable for years are suddenly back in the shops waiting to be plucked up by trembling hands thirsting for a long sought-after Blue Note, Prestige or Impulse.

So, everything in the garden appears to be blooming... Let's take a closer look, though.

Last October's Camden Jazz Week failed to materialise - why? Likewise, this year's Capital Jazz Festival is not happening - why? The country's largest source of funding, the Arts Council of Great Britain, has no clearly defined policy towards jazz and improvised music because of government policy and internal politics. This has resulted in the British jazz scene (the largest in Europe) facing collapse with our most talented musicians being forced to spend most of their time working abroad or, in some cases, living virtually permanently in exile or face the prospect of working for unscrupulous pub landlords for a fee well below union rates - so why?

One reason, of course, is wholly financial but it's much more fundamental than that. We've always viewed the presentation of jazz on radio and TV as a concession - a handful of crumbs. Likewise, live events - especially festivals - are seen as an oasis. In a desert of inactivity, we are grateful for the occasional thirst-quencher.

We do, however, fail to question either the quality or value of presentation. We are pleased by the appearance of a new magazine but how does it rate against similar publications in other countries? How does Channel Four's *Four Up, Two Down* stand as a programme in presentation and

content? Do we need a National Jazz Centre or should the money have been spent ensuring musicians receive a realistic reward for their labours? Are you concerned that top British musicians are regularly playing for maybe no more than the cost of a couple of Japanese imported albums? Do you buy only re-issues or are you also concerned about the present state?

Over the coming issues, we will be attempting to examine the jazz establishment, the working of the Arts Council as it relates to jazz, the National Jazz Centre, promoting bodies, the media, etc in an attempt to answer some questions. What is AIMS? How could denims have helped jazz?

We would welcome your views.

One final thought - it is rumoured that jazz on Channel Four attracted a weekly audience of 400,000. If only a quarter of those viewers bought records and went to concerts (or even bought jazz magazines), how much effect would this have?

Interesting thought, eh? **Anthony Wood**

CROSSED WIRE...

On page 15 of Issue Two, the lower photograph of Chingis Mingus was wrongly credited to Jak Kilby. The picture was in fact by Val Wilmer.

On page 37, GLAA Young Jazz Musician pianist Dave Shaw - in a case of mistaken identity - was erroneously described as being a member of the Flying Pickets. Dave Shaw has no connection with this band.

We apologise for any inconvenience.

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 For subscription details see page 36.

WEATHER REPORT

IN THE NEW year, a country-wide area of depression settled on Weather Report fans as they received with horror the news that, after 11 creative years, this influential and creative band was no more.

The departure of Jaco Pastorius and drummer Pete Erskine resulted in 'Weather Report Break Up' headlines – a story corroborated, at the time, by a confused CBS press office.

What has actually transpired is that Joe Zawinul and Wayne Shorter are holding it all together with a new Weather Report line-up.

Meanwhile, Pastorius – long keen to put together his own big band (a 16-piece has been mooted) – is working elsewhere on a grand solo project. However, 'a Pastorius guest spot' with Weather Report in the future hasn't been ruled out.

Was this new Pastorius direction possibly predicted by some of the larger-ensemble arrangements on *Word of Mouth* (his solo album for Warner Brothers)? I'm thinking particularly of prophetic tracks like 'Liberty City' and the stunning, acclaimed arrangement of Lennon-McCartney's 'Blackbird'.

Word of Mouth was a musically excellent but strangely enigmatic album – no musicians' credits (although A Certain Tenorist, Pianist, Drummer and Harmonica-player were undeniably present) – presumably for 'contractual' reasons. Understandable.

Considering the wealth of brilliant material on *Word of Mouth* (five Pastorius originals), the album was mystifyingly under-promoted by Warner Brothers.

The news in February that Pastorius' left arm had been permanently paralysed after an accident, coinciding with the imminent Weather Report album *Procession* – minus Pastorius – sent out further shock waves. The 'permanent damage' turns out to be no worse(?) than a broken arm received after Pastorius' fall from a third-floor balcony in Italy . . . , although exactly how that came about no one is saying. The latest is that the arm is mending, with Pastorius turning up at WB's Burbank office 'in good spirits'. With Pastorius provisionally booked for the Montreux Jazz Festival in July, his still unannounced line-up is awaited with much interest.

As to Weather Report . . . they're obviously still holding in the popularity stakes, having recently been named *Down Beat's* Best Jazz Group (for the seventh year) and Shorter Best Soprano Saxophonist (13th year).

Zawinul's and Shorter's new line-up features on the new album, the 12th Weather Report release – and, this time, they've gone for 'a combination of youth and experience'.

Making a good job of a tall order on bass is 22-year-old Berklee graduate Victor Bailey; he's worked with Larry Coryell, Tom Browne and Hugh Masakela.

With so many rumours flying around about the 'demise' of WEATHER REPORT, not to mention the subsequent alarming health reports about bassist JACO PASTORIUS, an investigation was in order. This is the latest Weather Report – and the outlook is fair to good, but changeable . . .

Drummer Omar Hakim, 23, has been playing drums since he was five, graduating from New York's High School of Music and Art; his background includes artists as diverse as David Sanborn, George Benson, Roy Ayres and Carly Simon.

Percussionist Jose Rossy, 28, is probably the most intriguing. Having studied tympani and percussion at the Puerto Rico Conservatory, he spent three years performing with celebrated cellist Pablo Casals, and was a member of the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra. Since moving to New York six years ago, Rossy – in spite of these credentials – has had a pretty undistinguished career to date with the likes of Peter Allen, Labelle and Cameo.

Procession will probably come under more aggressive promotion when Weather Report play London's Hammersmith Odeon (2nd and 3rd June) and Manchester (5th). The album's inclusion of Manhattan Transfer's vocal track isn't that surprising as their cover of 'Birdland' has always been Zawinul's favourite version of his own tune.

Procession – definitive Weather Report? Well, it's a bit up and down, with a few 'repeats' slipping in but the magic is still there – if elusive. On the strength of Bailey's stirring bass-work, the live gigs look promising. CM



Josef Zawinul



Wayne Shorter



Jaco Pastorius

EUBIE BLAKE

1883-1983



The 100th birthday of ragtime pioneer, pianist, composer EUBIE BLAKE on 7th February was an unprecedented event in jazz history, demanding worldwide celebration. Eubie Blake had seemed indestructible – then, just five days later, he died . . .

As recently as 1981, Eubie Blake took the concert-stand along with a new generation of piano stars including Herbie Hancock, Ramsey Lewis and George Duke. The occasion was a lavish keyboard concert organised by CBS (*One Night Stand: A Keyboard Event* – CBS 88527). On what must have been one of his last major public performances, the 98-year-old Eubie Blake treated a delighted audience to an unforgettable version of his own, enduring 'Charleston Rag' composed when he was just 16 years old. It was an emotional moment.

Here, pianist, performer and jazz historian Earl Okin pays tribute to the immortal Eubie Blake.

JAMES HUBERT BLAKE died on 12th February. Nothing extraordinary about the passing away of a musician, I suppose, until you look at his dates. Yes, he made it. I was beginning to hope that, like Denis Compton, having got to his century he would take fresh guard and go for his second, but sadly a few days after his birthday and lots of parties (some of course totally irrelevant), he died, apparently of pneumonia.

Eubie Blake was born on the 7th February, 1883, in Baltimore; his parents were both ex-slaves. His mother, Emily Johnson, was a laundress. Eubie was the only one of 11 children to reach adulthood and, considering his mother's intensely violent form of religious educational ideas, it seems a miracle that he

made it either. His father, John Sumner Blake – 50 years older than Eubie, to the day – always let 'Mouse' (Eubie's first nickname) fight his own street-fights, so he grew up tough.

That 'ungodly' ragtime

Emily bought an organ for the house and was horrified when Eubie started syncopating. 'Take that ungodly ragtime out of my house,' she would yell, and that's how he found out what it was called. The year was 1890.

As Duke Ellington was to discover a generation later, the more tricks you knew on the keyboard, the more contests you could win and with the contests came the pick of the pretty girls. Eubie improved rapidly.

By the time we reach 1898, Eubie – now 15 – could play ragtime and popular songs in Aggie Sheldon's parlour. This was the most 'respectable' bawdy house in town and Eubie took home three dollars a week plus considerable tips. Soon he'd saved \$100, but his already unique left hand (a sort of reverse boogie-woogie) gave him away. A neighbour heard it, recognised it, reported it to his mother, and the wrath of God boxed his ears soundly once more. But his father saw the \$100 and Eubie was able to continue playing at Aggie Sheldon's until 1901.

The significant link

In 1899, Eubie wrote the *Charleston Rag*, astounding for its day. You hear not a classic rag but an early anticipation of styles to appear in jazz piano for years to come. Apart from ragtime elements, and the aforementioned boogie-woogie left hand, or walking-bass as Eubie would call it, this piece shows as clearly as anything can that Eubie

was the one-man link between ragtime and arguably the most influential piano style in jazz history – stride. As such, his influence reaches through James P. Johnson who met him early on, to Fats Waller, and right on to Thelonious Monk and beyond. Is this an overstatement of his importance? Well, perhaps, but his significance has been so long ignored that a little redressing of the balance can't do any harm.

Eubie played in medicine shows, bawdy houses, saloons, was shot at and had all sorts of chequered experiences, but, by the end of all this, was a thoroughly schooled musician, and could play anything in any key.

Shuffling along to Broadway

He married in 1910, and obviously must have begun to live a far more settled life, for by 1919 or so he was teamed up with the oh-so-respectable Noble Sissie (who had previously been with Jim Europe, the first ever black bandleader who was killed at the end of World War I). This act, the Dixie Duo, was to revolutionise black entertainment within three years. Rejecting burnt-cork and overalls, they wore tuxedos and played for millionaires. Then, however, due to various accidental meetings, they were drawn into conceiving and writing the first all-black musical to hit Broadway, *Shuffle Along*. The year was 1921 and the show was a sensation. The sets were magnificent, the sketches were real, the music was superb and there were beautiful girls who could actually dance!

During the following decade, black theatre enjoyed a flowering of talent unequalled since. There were shows written by James P. Johnson, Fats Waller and Duke Ellington to name but three, and the productions were as lavish as Hollywood; and none of the songs was better in quality than those of Eubie Blake. *I'm Just Wild About Harry* and the beautiful *Memoirs of You* are just two of his hits. Then came the crash and talkies, and things never were quite the same, until recently when a rash of retrospective black musicals has sought to recapture at least the echo of those glamorous, talented days.

An ear for talent

Of course, the artistes available at that time were rather special. As if Eubie Blake wasn't enough for hopeful piano-players to boggle at. *Shuffle Along* also featured the legendary Luckey Roberts. Down in the pit you could find, among others, the young Benny Waters who is, of course, still playing all over Europe and is still underrated even in his 80s; and he could look up at that beautiful chorus line, a line that included Josephine Baker and our own link with that watershed of a show, Adelaide Hall.

Yes, a greater finder of talent was Eubie Blake. Not only did he help these and James P. Johnson at the beginning of their careers, but he played a major part in the discovery of another up-and-coming pianist of the day, Earl Hines.

Singer, songwriter, pianist of major importance, we are so lucky to have had Eubie Blake around for as long as we did. It's difficult to exaggerate his importance to black music (don't call it Jazz, he was old enough to remember what that word originally meant, and it was a verb!). No wonder everybody celebrated on 7th February when he reached 100. He used to say: 'If I'd have known how long I was going to live, I'd have taken more care of myself'. He was right. He could have been going for that second century. ■



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Jan Kirby

Both here and across the Channel, trombonist PAUL RUTHERFORD has stretched the vocabulary of his instrument but to little public acclaim. David Ilic uncovers his influences.

JAZZ PRIDES itself on its revolutionary nature, a music born with the inherent capacity for near constant change and development. Thus it appears contradictory that the reputations of jazz musicians should remain strangely unyielding. Leaders, once established, are leaders for life. Such is often the same for sidemen who are rarely credited with the capacity to formulate and direct.

Trombonist Paul Rutherford has, for years, been renowned as a figure involved with other people's music. Now, after some 20-plus years, he is directly formulating music of his own. Those London-based jazz aficionados may well have encountered the work of his current free-jazz trio (with drummer Nigel Morris and the superlative bassist Paul Rogers); a combo whose music draws initially from the innovations of John Coltrane. Add to this his forays into solo performance and the revitalised *Iskra* 1903 (an all-electric improvising group comprising violinist Phil Wachsmann and bassist Barry Guy) and the stage would appear to be set for him finally to establish himself as a vital, driving force in contemporary music. Rutherford waxes enthusiastic on all three fronts; his trio in particular fulfils a long-held ambition. Yet old reputations die hard.

Contribution to British jazz

There is no doubting the validity of his contributions to the music of great British jazzers. For years, he was associated with Mike Westbrook, contributing to both his large-scale orchestration and the more informal outings of Westbrook's Brass Band. Rutherford's association with drummer John Stevens stretches back even further; from the current fixations with Freebop (a vehicle given to re-examining bebop through collective improvisation), through numerous *ad hoc* improvising groups and the first ever incarnation of the renowned Spontaneous Music Ensemble, to after-hours sessions

improvising around Charlie Parker themes during their years in the Royal Air Force (1958-63).

What makes Rutherford such an adept, versatile instrumentalist is his all-embracing view of music. As a South London working-class kid, he became exposed to jazz in all its many forms.

'My brother loved modern jazz and my sister went for New Orleans, so there was always music in the house where I lived. When I first heard Buck Johnson and Charlie Parker, what knocked me out was the difference in their music compared to what I had been listening to (Frankie Laine).'

From these relatively commonplace beginnings, Rutherford himself found the urge to play, later given to hauling his trombone around to various Dixieland and New Orleans-style gigs. Now, many years and musical associations later, he retains a love for being active in diverse musical situations. His healthy disregard for classification is no longer derived, however, from listening to music alone. Rather, it reflects the importance he attaches to philosophy and politics (Rutherford is an active Communist); a noticeable trait which invariably permeated this interview.

'I cannot see the reasons for looking at it any other way, for if you are sectarian about music, then you are sectarian about life as well. Music is a living thing — there are only two types of music, and that is good or bad. Why put labels on human activity? The only reason for packaging it up is that if it is possibly commercial, they (the music industry) can pull it out of the file.'

Excavating hidden areas

Out of this diversity of experience, Rutherford has created a highly personalised style; one which marks his playing as tonally rich and varied. In solo performance, he has excavated previously hidden areas of the trombone's range and explored new contexts for the instrument (in using electronics, for example). If the results have sometimes alienated and confused, then his group work-outs have achieved a greater consistency. Of those recorded, perhaps the Vinyl-released *444* (with Stevens, Guy and saxophonist Evan Parker) serves as one of the finer examples of Rutherford's capacity to

PAUL RUTHERFORD

listen as well as to contribute; notably achieving a great empathy with Parker, himself one of Britain's more innovative and radical instrumentalists.

Free improvisation has provided the main thrust of Rutherford's activity; a contributing factor, perhaps, to his politicisation of music. Undoubtedly one of the Sixties' pioneers, many chose either to pass over or completely forget his active role in the formation of the SME – themselves a seminal force in free music. The foundations were set in informal blowing sessions during Rutherford's time in the RAF.

'In reality, we had a very easy time, working from nine until 12, unless there was a parade – we hated it! The RAF band's music wasn't that exciting either. I remember the most exciting thing I played was the fourth movement of Shostakovich's *Fifth Symphony*: this was when we were in Germany, supposedly protecting the West from the Russians, irony on irony! So, John, Trevor (Watts) and I started playing together in the afternoons (circa 1961). We had all heard Coltrane and (Eric) Dolphy, so we shared a common interest in jazz. What also brought us together was our mutual feeling of desperation. The rest of the band called us Scoobs.'

From these humble beginnings, the SME flowered, originally inspired by American innovators (most notably Ornette Coleman) but, as can now be seen

so clearly, they were to etch out a music more relevant to the culture of white, British musicians. Sadly, such a facility to search and personalise the music of Europeans would still appear to be missing from contemporary jazz. Or is it? Rutherford muses on the possibility that criticism of jazz had lagged behind the development of the music itself.



'European musicians are judged as to how they compare with black Americans – that's bull-shit, for Europeans have not gone through the same experiences. Jazz is certainly the most vibrant American music, but it has changed. The monopoly has been shifted by the European's capacity to play a synthesis of jazz and traditionally European music which, therefore, makes it different. Perhaps we can say that

Americans can't do that, so they in turn are being influenced by Europeans.

'One thing I find very strange is that critics in this country will flock to anything that comes in from America, yet they will not question what is happening in Britain. As Tony Oxley once said, British musicians are keeping the myth going. One can understand the appeal of assessing someone who is not around very often, although that is bringing a small amount of resentment which should not really exist.'

Out of this imbalance come the mere practicalities of British musicians working in jazz. Rutherford is not the first to bemoan the lack of playing opportunities which, beyond their immediate financial implications, affect the state and development of the music. Doubtless, he will not be the last.

'The Musicians Union has finally woken up to the fact that when they work on a quota basis (musician for musician) American jazz players come over here, yet we send over rock musicians in their place. It is certainly not a reciprocal agreement.'

Given these circumstances, it would, perhaps, be an easier option for Rutherford openly to ape the music of the black Americans which constitutes the more customary (and even acceptable) face

of jazz. Yet two decades following his initial involvement with the SME, Rutherford's convictions towards improvisation – not only as a working medium but also as a political statement – remain absolute.

Questionable interests

'Music right through from rock to classical is based on conventions. Improvised music is the only music in the West that doesn't use conventions. The very fact of it being improvised, as I understand the term, is that there is a chance that it might not work, therefore the musician has nothing else to fall back on except his own musical ingenuity. That runs in opposition to a musical establishment dictated by people whose interest in music is questionable. As far as I'm concerned, any real musician should be able to improvise.'

'When I was at college, the place was filled with people who could read music, even fly-shit; yet if you took the score away from them, they were lost – totally incapable of functioning as musicians. So, our institution is based on academism, and it means a lot of money to a lot of people.'

'If you played music without going to college and learning all of the rules, it would inevitably put a lot of people out of work.'



SEVEN

STEPS

TO
JAZZ

In the third of this series which looks at the great instrumental innovators in jazz, **CHARLES FOX** makes his personal choice of seven influential pianists.

JAMES P JOHNSON (1894-1955)

Classic ragtime was decidedly a composer's genre. Scott Joplin, James Scott and their rivals devised pieces that rarely had fewer than four separate themes and were intended for performance exactly as written.

Jelly Roll Morton, down in New Orleans, and James P Johnson, based in New York, really transformed ragtime into jazz. The harmonies and ambience were brought closer to the blues, syncopation became less rigid, themes were restricted to maybe just a couple – and with the pianist improvising on them, giving a very personal interpretation.

Johnson, like Joplin, fancied himself as a composer of extended works (his *Symphony Harlem* was presented as ballet music in 1937); his most popular piece, though, was the snappy dance-routine 'Charleston', almost a synonym for the Jazz Age. Yet Johnson's prime creation was the founding of a school of playing variously known as Harlem piano or stride piano: robust but concise; very much a solo style, with the pianist's left hand providing all the rhythm needed.

Johnson went on recording until the late Forties, but nothing exemplifies his music better than his 1921 version of 'Carolina Shout'.



James P. Johnson

EARL HINES (1905)

Jazz has frequently been shaped by its surroundings. Earl Hines's distinctive use of octaves, for instance, apparently came about as a way of cutting through the din in some of the clubs he played at (those were days when singers still used megaphones to make themselves heard).

Hines's habit of playing single-note treble lines used to be nicknamed 'trumpet-style piano' and attributed to the influence of Louis Armstrong. Not so, Hines, is quick to declare, adding that when he and Armstrong collaborated in Chicago during the Twenties they did so as equals. But however Hines's style came about it was both exciting and revolutionary. As well as the springy phrasing, the incessant improvising, there was a rhythmic approach that got away from both the over-obviousness of ragtime and the more relaxed certainties of 'stride piano'. Hines became famous for suspending the beat, embarking upon an involved digression before returning to rhythmic safety.

Throughout the Thirties, and part of the Forties, he led a big band (in 1943 it included both Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie). But Hines's real status is as one of the greatest of individual soloists, a performer brimming with a musical curiosity – and pride – that demands that he improvises a different solo every time, however familiar the material. A 1972 LP, *Tour De Force*, shows that process happening.

ART TATUM (1910-1956)

No jazz musician has been so idolised by his peers as Art Tatum, regarded as a nonpareil by jazz pianists of succeeding generations. For them, his feats remain larger than life, rather like those that W G Grace performed season after season on sun-lit Victorian cricket fields. Part of the fascination, of course, was Tatum's technique, the ease with which he executed those runs, the way arpeggios would be rattled off without a fluff or flurry.

Tatum's style revolved unabashedly around virtuosity – an approach often misunderstood by romantically minded jazz buffs, for whom virtuosity sometimes gets confused with showing off. But a technical challenge is just one way of uncorking the imagination. And Tatum, as well as exhibiting a prodigious expertise, was also, in the Thirties, anticipating at least a few of the harmonic insights that would be credited to the beboppers.

He was no composer; and, on the whole, he seemed happier decorating a musical shape rather than improvising above bare chords. But he could transform other men's tunes lavishly, his rococo inventions amounting to drastic recomposition.

Perhaps listening to too many Tatum solos at one go can blur the impact (the same is true of boogie-woogie and eating Turkish Delight), so try, say, half a dozen to begin with. Few performances demonstrate the range better than the 'St Louis Blues' made at Tatum's first solo recording session in 1933. It is easy to understand why all the other pianists despaired.

COUNT BASIE (1904)

Most pianists in the Thirties lacked the confidence, let alone the expertise, to copy Art Tatum (a few tried and succeeded, like the under-rated Herman Chittison). Earl Hines's innovations could be absorbed more usefully, as shown by the lazily immaculate playing of Teddy Wilson and Jess Stacy's staccato brilliance – two pianists, incidentally, who can be recognised from their touch alone.

Older than both Tatum and Hines, Count Basie was, as it were, a late developer. In the Twenties he followed in the wake of Fats Waller, part of Harlem's 'stride' tradition (the records made with Bennie Moten's Orchestra have him sounding exactly like that). But, by the time he brought one of the most inspired of all big bands to New York halfway through the Thirties, he had opted for a minimalism that fitted his laconic temperament.

The origin must have been functional, the defining of a role for the pianist within a new conception of the rhythm section, in which piano, guitar, bass and drums meshed together without any overlapping. There was no longer a logical reason for the pianist to fill out an elaborate bass part. So Basie's solos assumed an epigrammatic sparseness, a single note suddenly taking on dramatic power.

Listen to his 1938 recording of 'How Long Blues', deceptively simple and one of the most moving piano blues since Jimmy Yancey.



Earl Hines



Art Tatum

BUD POWELL (1924-1966)

Thelonious Monk was one of the creators of bebop, yet as a pianist his quirky, idiosyncratic manner (he brought his own harmonies to everything he played) made him a maverick rather than an exemplar.

The pianist most fitted to be that – deploying all the characteristics that the beboppers shared – was Bud Powell, moving from one classic style (he was influenced by Tatum, Teddy Wilson and the then very fashionable Billy Kyle) to establish the foundations of another. But he could not have done so without Count Basie's refurbishing of the rhythm section, curtailing the scope of the pianist's left hand, placing much more emphasis upon exploring the treble. Bud Powell set about this with amazing tenacity and inventiveness, becoming one of the most exhilarating as well as the most original pianists in jazz.

Unhappily, from the Fifties onward he suffered severe mental breakdowns, when his playing would seem no more than a caricature of itself. Yet, at his finest, Powell possessed the creative virtuosity of a Tatum or a Hines, ideas spilling out incessantly, as if there was no end to his inspiration.

Tatum had been fond of using 'Tea For Two' as an excuse for his particular pyrotechnics; Powell's 1950 recording of that tune follows a similarly hectic pattern, yet it also reveals the important differences between these two great performers.



Bill Evans

BILL EVANS (1929-1980)

Plenty of extraordinary pianists surfaced between the Forties and the Sixties: Lennie Tristano, unique but doctrinaire, the talented but over-zealous Oscar Peterson (pushing is not the same as swinging), and such half-forgotten figures as Richard Twardzik, dead at 24 with a major talent unfulfilled. Yet the calm, scholarly looking Bill Evans stands out as somebody who created superbly lyrical and graceful music.

So subtle and unspectacular was Evans's approach, especially his treatment of standard material, that a popular British jazz writer dismissed him early on as nothing more than a cocktail pianist. In fact, Evans could be said to improvise at two levels, from within and without, taking familiar tunes but reshaping their harmonies. No pianist has had a keener harmonic ear – and he used it to express a particular sensibility, rather as Bix Beiderbecke did in the Twenties and Miles Davis (at one time Evans's bandleader) did 30 years later. And the same uniqueness of line and texture emerges in Evans's own compositions.

For a performer of such sophistication, it seems curious that his style scarcely changed between his first appearance on the jazz scene and how he was playing just before his death. His influence upon fellow pianists, including Keith Jarrett, Herbie Hancock and our own Gordon Beck, was immense. And just as Count Basie redefined the classic rhythm section, so Evans brought a new relaxation to trio playing, setting up a new kind of rapport with bassist and drummer. It comes across on the recordings that have been re-issued as *The Village Vanguard Sessions*.

CECIL TAYLOR (1933)

Jazz innovators have a way of seeming prickly to begin with, then merging into the tradition, what was startling suddenly becoming authoritative or at least familiar. It has happened with Ornette Coleman, it could have done so with Coltrane had he gone on living. But Cecil Taylor, who surfaced in New York before both of those pioneers really got going, makes it as hard for present-day listeners to keep up with him as he did at the Five Spot a quarter of a century ago.

Unlike the six pianists already listed, all capable of inveigling the uncommitted into at least tolerating what they do, Taylor can turn a performance into a kind of marathon, demanding stamina from the audience as well as the musicians (his season at Ronnie Scott's Club allowed no chinks for chatter to break in). Too much seems to be happening, at too intense a level, for even the keenest ears to grasp everything. That has always been true of Taylor's music, atonal almost from the beginning and using serialism and other European techniques (Taylor studied at the New England Conservatory) within a performing style that is Afro-American.

Taylor's latter-day recordings tend to be of extended improvisations, lasting for anything up to an hour, even 90 minutes; newcomers might find that the shorter pieces which make up *Fly! Fly! Fly! Fly! Fly!* (MPS 0068.263) are more approachable, developing – and using dynamics – in a very comprehensible way.



Count Basie



Cecil Taylor



Bud Powell

PERCY GRAINGER

At the turn of the century, PERCY GRAINGER made far-sighted forays into free music, challenging an unsympathetic age.

Brian Morton looks at this wholly remarkable and largely underrated pioneer.

PERCY GRAINGER, like many artists before him and since, was pessimistically convinced that his fate was to be remembered for his least successful and characteristic works. 'Country Gardens', with suitably banal lyrics, became a *Family Favourites* staple. Charlie Parker added his weight to the tune's questionable fame by using its most recognisable phrases to round off his 'Cool Blues'. Since then, a hundred imitators have taken the same route out of awkward progressions and aborted solos.

The irony of the song's fame was compounded by Grainger's own serious interest in jazz composition. Ellington and Gershwin suggested a link between the conventional concert pieces which earned him his living and the music he wanted to create.

Percy Grainger was born in Melbourne in July 1882, the only child of a spectacularly unhappy family. John Grainger, his father, was riddled with drink, syphilis and a grotesquely theatrical view of himself; he quickly departed the family scene. Rose Grainger and her son became all the more intensely attached. She gave him his first music lessons and his introduction to the Nordic sagas that obsessed him. The relationship had its darker aspect, too; Rose Grainger instilled Percy's obsession with physical strength and the fatal identification of love with pain that lay behind his bizarrely specialised sexual appetites, a mixture of algolagnia and idealised incest.

Wayward talents

At ten, Grainger began to study music in earnest and at 12 gave his first public piano recital. The following year, 1895, he left Australia for Europe to study composition and to continue the numbing routine of concert appearances – the source of his greatest fame. Grainger's associates and teachers – Louis Pabst, Ferruccio Busoni, Grieg, Cyril Scott and, crucially, Delius – fostered his often wayward talents though he often claimed a characteristic self-satisfaction, that their impact on his ideas was much less than his on theirs.

Grainger's most important concrete musicalological achievement was his collection and painstaking transcription of hundreds of folk songs. Here, without question, his work influenced his contemporaries, particularly Delius. Grainger revealed that folk idioms, and the techniques of jazz which he admired so much, were anything but simplistic or naive. His accurate transcriptions demonstrated that the simplest melodic or lyrical materials often suggested the subtlest and most complex variations in performance: one Lincolnshire ballad contained 31 distinct time changes.

Father of Free Music?



Working on Free-music Machine in White Plains, N.Y., 1950s

Technological fascination

Grainger's study of folk music and jazz revealed one obsession and led to another which lay behind his later experiments with 'free' composition. The interest in popular rather than serious forms echoed his obsessive concern with 'democracy', a political ideal which he applied with astonishing consistency and vigour in everything he touched. In investigating folk forms, Grainger pioneered the use in the field of early wax recording devices. The combination of the two interests – the hatred of hierarchies and the fascination with technologies underpinned a growing dissatisfaction with his concert repertoire. His detestation of Beethoven and love of 'Nordic' forms (a love that inspired his coining of a grotesque 'Blue-eyed English', with uneasy undertones of Nazism) led him to experiment with totally new means of composition.

In his *Statement on Free-Music*, Grainger wrote:

'Music is an art not yet grown up; its condition is comparable to that stage of Egyptian bas-reliefs when the head and legs were shown in profile while the torso appeared "front face" – the stage of development in which the myriad irregular suggestions of nature can only be taken up in regularised or conventionalised forms. With free music we enter the phase of technical maturity such as that enjoyed by the Greek sculptures when all aspects and attitudes of the human body could be shown in arrested movement.'

The crucial opposition here is that between 'nature' and 'convention'. Obsessed with the sounds of wind and water that had haunted his youth and with the inability of conventional music to capture them, Grainger came to question the very harmonic and rhythmic premises of most Western music.

Folk and jazz idioms – to say nothing of the arrhythmic medieval plainsong – provided ready-made contrasts; Grainger, though, wanted to go even further.

Given the constraints of Western harmony and instruments, music was dependent on arbitrary leaps up and down a fixed scale. *Portamento* and *glissando* effects, like the *legato* of the singer or slide trombone player, were cosmetic or corrective tactics rather than natural elements of musical structure. Grainger was deeply impressed by Duke Ellington's use of *glissandi* as major elements of composition and he looked hard at the way Gregorian chant and plainsong avoided hierarchical harmonic structure by equating rhythm and melody on a single 'democratic' plane (something that Ornette Coleman has done successfully with his 'Harmolodics'). Generally, though, Western music was inescapably hierarchical, demanding harmonic resolution according to fixed laws. Grainger longed to free music from such strictures.

Obsession with nature

Early experiments drew largely on the subtleties he had found buried in the folk song, but now foregrounded as major compositional devices. In the 1907 draft of 'Sea Song' (again the obsession with 'natural' sounds and subjects), the first 13 bars call for a dazzling variety of time signatures: 1/4 7/32 3/32 5/64 5/16 3/8 7/64 3/32 5/64 9/32 3/8 7/64 5/16; the earlier 'Hill Song' began with an even more taxing series of half-beats. Grainger recognised that such variations were beyond normal (that is, human) performative means. 'Sea Song' was an experiment, never intended for performance, but it signalled Grainger's desire to free music from the 'tyranny of the performer', stemming from his musical ideals and from his increasing dislike of concert work.

Grainger sought a music which was wholly 'democratic', in which each note had an independent status and value, not simply as part of a rigid harmonic hierarchy. He also sought to increase the range of available sounds: his early obsession with unfashionable orchestral instruments like the saxophone and with sustained use of tuned percussion led to the writing of music for purely mechanical performance, an ideal he acquired again through an early love for player-pianos and elaborate inventions like citherophones and Theremins. The use of such machines making possible highly complex rhythms and sound patterns and of removing the performer from the nexus of composer and listener; the result was analogous to the so-called 'director's theatre' in which the flourishes and egocentricities of performance do not come between the creator and his watchers or listeners.

With the physicist Burnett Cross, Grainger attempted to create free-music machines –

instruments capable of playing 'scaleless, pulseless music'. The machines had to be able to play any pitch within their range and glide as well as leap from pitch to pitch. Most crucially, these machines had to be free of the constraints of arbitrary tone divisions. Grainger and Cross worked with incredibly Heath Robinson materials, basing their prototypes at first on paper-roll player-pianos. The later, more sophisticated machines 'read' graph-like patterns etched in plastic ink on moving paper rollers and translated the light-images thus acquired into sound via a pre-amplifier. In some respects, these were the forerunners of today's synthesisers and tone generators.

An awesome leap

In most cases, the Moog and its offspring have been used conventionally as surrogates for a whole range of other instruments. Grainger sought a music which was entirely free of reference to the accepted canons and conventional techniques. The shift from irregular barring and use of dissonance – something familiar from Scriabin, Debussy, even, as a means to harmonic tension, in Mozart – to a music without pre-set harmonic value or metrical time was awesome. Grainger was too adventurous a musical thinker and too extreme a proponent of his own ideas ever to have won much support for them. The experiments of Cage, Berio and Boulez were in some ways prefigured by Grainger, as were Stockhausen's mechanical experiments.

To risk anti-climax, Grainger's acknowledged impact on contemporary music has been depressingly small; equally, his own compositional output is rather slight. Predictably, he insisted loudly on his contribution to modern music but was uncomfortably aware that he had been thwarted by the state of the technology and widespread suspicion of iconoclastic 'free music'. In his *Statement*, he was at least implicitly aware that his ideas belonged to the future. Posterity was his obsession. He declared frankly a desire for beautiful daughters (so that he could have sex with

them); he feared the loss of the past and collected its products obsessively; most strikingly, he built a museum in his native Melbourne dedicated to his own life and work. A man in some ways trapped in his own infantile self-image, concerned at once with self-destruction and with obsessive conservations, he pointed the direction of modern music and sketched out some of the most startling of its innovations and exploration. ■



Grainger with *Delmus* at *Gru-zur-Lung*, late 1920s



With Duke Ellington at New York University, 1932

Any student of Grainger will depend to a great extent on John Bird's brilliant biography (*Faber*, 1976, 1982) and Lennox Foreman's *The Percy Grainger Companion* (Thames, 1981). Both, superbly illustrated, contain valuable discographies and the crucial *Statement* on Free-Music.

For further listening, Percy Grainger Plays Brahms and Grainger – 1926, 1927 & 1929 (*Impressario IMP3*, Cambridge Records); Percy Grainger, John Hopkins & the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (EMI EMD 5514); To A Nordic Princess, John Hopkins and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (EMI OASD 7606); Brigg Fair, J. Partridge & the Elizabethan Singers (Argo ZRG 5496); With Song No. 2, *Frederick Foxwell* & the Eastman Wood Ensemble (Mercury Golden Imports SR1 7501).

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Two life-long ALBERT AYLER enthusiasts – Bill Smith and Brian Case – remember the legendary, lost tenorman.

THIRTEENTH OF February, 1966, a new era of enlightenment began. The overjoy of one's first child. A girl. A celebration of some magnitude would begin.

Nineteenth of February, 1966 – The Lincoln Centre – NYC. The people's section of Philharmonic Hall was filled, so we were forced to purchase the expensive seats. Front row centre. *Titans of the Tenor*, was the title of the show. Coleman Hawkins, Yusef Lateef, Sonny Rollins, and then Carlos Ward, Pharoah Sanders, John Coltrane, Jimmy Garrison, Rashied Ali, J C Moses and Don and Albert Ayler. This era, in the popular American press, was being proclaimed as dead. JAZZ IS DEAD.

Philharmonic Hall is quite what you'd expect, built for a Symphony, but not expecting the 40-minute symphony that ensued. The music was truly unbelievable. From Garrison's flamenco opening, the music built and, as the confidence of the players strengthened, as their spirits became of one accord, so the music transcended 'My Favorite Things' and exploded into vocalised shout/song/holler. Sanders scream surrounded by Ali flurry. Coltrane knowing that this was a 'new' song. Albert so beautiful, singing praise so virile, me no longer a virgin, taken by a new power so real that most everything afterwards would seem not to happen. The truth is marching in.

This piece of music by Coltrane's augmented band, was all solo music. There was no attempt made to produce any real group music. Probably there wasn't time, for the Ayler's were only invited to appear a couple of days before the concert. Apparently Coltrane had been trying to persuade the promoters to book Ayler's own group, but when this

'Albert so beautiful, singing praise so virile, me no longer a virgin, taken by a new power that most everything afterwards would seem not to happen ...'

..THE TRUTH IS MARCH-ING IN

failed he solved the situation by inviting them to play with him.' (John Norris – Coda).

The silence at the performance end exploded into amazed appreciation.

Monday nights was Albert Ayler night at the Astor Playhouse – a small, funky old theatre in the Village. Now we could hear him in total. The players in the band are almost a description in themselves. Albert and Don Ayler, Charles Tyler (alto), Joel Freedman (cello) and Ronald Shannon Jackson (drums). It's such a warm feeling that one gets from old theatres, the slightly ratty environment being a comfortable parallel with one's life. It feels, that for the first time the parameters of jazz are being redefined, for although Ornette's and Coltrane's saxophone music have made positive steps away from boredom, they still rely, in this period, a great deal upon the tradition. Here is a new music, not necessarily in notation, but in spirit. Time is free-floating rhythm, escaping from clockwork meter, throwing off the last confinement of European traditions. A pure American music. Already there are comparisons by critics, having as they do to link everything with past standards, that it is based in European folk rounds. I still search for this mythological European music that is so volatile it makes the soul tremble.





Vol. Warner

Just around the corner was Slugs, a lower East Side neighbourhood bar. Much of the new music was being performed there. Spit and sawdust, I guess, would be a description. In NY State waiters are required by law to wash their hands after using the toilet. There seems to be no washbasin. Had gone there with Elizabeth Van der Mei and Albert, just for a beer. The Burton Greene quartet is the music. The saxophonist is Frank Smith, a white tenor-player, sounding already so much like Albert. A musician leaps up from the audience, knife thrust forward, ready to damage the imitation, wanting only to hear the master. The truth is marching in.

By now, in New York, Albert's reputation is building strong controversy, and he will, of course, be challenged by the jazz standards. One afternoon, at the Dom, a small club opposite the Five Spot, on Saint Marks Place, the tournament will begin. Tony Scott, a liberal bopper, runs the club. He has a rhythm section on this date, consisting of Henry Grimes (bass) and Eddie Marshall (drums). Pretty classy. The song is 'Summertime'. Albert's tenor is borrowed from Tony Scott, but the higher register unison lines are crystal clear, and soon – as was often the case – he is alone, singing his beautiful song. The truth is marching in.

I saw Albert only twice after this, once a year later at the London School of Economics, in England, where he was being filmed by the BBC. A show of 'animal music' that was never broadcast. And then in June of 1967, at last recognised, he appears at the legendary Newport Festival. Albert in two-tone beard, white suited, shining in stage lights. The truth is marching in.

In November 1970, Albert Ayler was found murdered, his body floating in the East River, NYC. The Truth Is Marching In.

Bill Smith

ALBERT AYLER: Swing Low Sweet Spiritual (Osmosis Records 4001)

Recorded: Atlantic Studios, NYC – 24th February, 1964.

Side One: 'Going Home'; 'Old Man River'; 'Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen'. Side Two: 'When The Saints Go Marching In'; 'Swing Low Sweet Spiritual'; 'Deep River'; 'Old Man River'.

Albert Ayler (ts, ss); Call Cobbs (p); Henry Grimes (b); Sunny Murray (d).

ALBERT AYLER: Lorrach/Paris 1966 (Hat Mistics 3500)

Recorded: S W German Radio – 7th November, 1966, and Radio France – 13th November, 1966.

Side One: 'Bells'; 'Jesus'. Side Two: 'Our Prayer'; 'Spirits'; 'Holy Ghost'. Side Three: 'Ghosts'; 'Ghosts'. Side Four: 'Holy Family'.

Albert Ayler (ts); Don Ayler (tp); Michael Sampson (vln); William Folwell (b); Beaver Harris (d).

ALBERT AYLER QUINTET: At Slug's Saloon, Vol One & Two (Base 3031, 3032)

Recorded: Jan Werner – 1st May, 1966.

Side One: 'Truth Is Marching In'. Side Two: 'Our Prayer'. Side One: 'Bells'. Side Two: 'Ghosts'. Albert Ayler (ts); Don Ayler (tp); Michael Sampson (vln); Lewis Worrell (b); Ron Jackson (d).

Given the fact that practically all of his best work – *Spiritual Unity*, *Spirits*, *Ghosts* and the recently released *Prophecy and Hiltersum Session* – was recorded in 1964, one goes first for the legendary spirituals album, and is massively disappointed. I suppose one expected those near-pentecostal freak-outs that occur on his own hymn-like originals, the tenor hysterically howling in the aisle while the group maintains the sobriety. Ayler here sticks rever-

ently to the tunes and is dull. His soprano nowhere approaches the passion shown on *My Name Is Albert Ayler*, and is often out of tune, while his tenor – apart from some busking in the vibrato and whimpers at the close of a phrase – is careful rather than caring. All the duet sections with the corny Call Cobbs remind one of an Edwardian recital of 'In A Monastery Garden', one posing with a roll of sheet music, the other with rosewater on his hair. Murray is inaudible – he often was – and the only drama and adventure comes from Grimes, who succeeds in giving the leader some momentum.

As a missing piece of the jigsaw, *Swing Low Sweet Spiritual* has the fascination of finding, perhaps, Cecil Taylor doing his best on 'The Girl With The Flaxen Hair'; as music, unfortunately, it isn't up to much. What did Ayler think he was doing here? Probably looking for a ready-made armature to house his improvisations – an old form which would carry the burden of black American history and conventional spirituality for him. It's lonely being far out. Mingus and later, the Art Ensemble and Air, managed to roll out the whole heritage within a number; Ayler never really reconciled his antique forms with his wildly contemporary improvisations. The tragedy is that before he became self-conscious about it, letting the music follow its head, he made the most artistic sense.

None of his post-1964 idioms came near the intensity of which he was capable. *New Grass*, the attempt at a crossover into r&b and soul, was frequently daft, while the collaboration with Mary Maria was disastrous. The other albums here come from Ayler's collective period in which the Moorish-Balkan pat-a-cake structures buckle in the middle to

release famous breaks. There is nothing here that you don't already know from *Love Cry* and *Greenwich Village* – except that Paris variations on 'Ghosts' sound as if the group is desperate to ring the changes on all those predictable swoons and ceremonials. One is not surprised. Ayler must have known that he had painted himself into a corner as far as improvisation was concerned. Most of his solos sound like Ornette on violin, brutally highulations that register little beyond a one-dimensional fury.

Of the two collections, the *Lorrach/Paris* is the better recorded. The ensembles on the familiar 'Bells', 'Our Prayer' and particularly 'Holy Ghost' are charming – and consequently at odds with the uniformly end-of-tether solos. Sampson is clear for a change, and comes on like Barry Guy on violin on 'Bells' to good effect, whereas the *At Slug's Saloon* recording reduces him to whistery whistlings. There's quite a bit of murk at Slug's, and a lengthy conversation across 'Bells'. One finds oneself grateful for the odd divergence in intonation or placing in both lots of routines.

Albert Ayler has been dead 13 years. His best work still shakes the heart like nothing else, but we are talking about five albums from a single year, and a few great moments. He hadn't lost it, any more than he couldn't find it, as 'Bye Bye Blackbird' and 'For John Coltrane' prove, but he was possibly so driven by the knowledge that he had found a route to the spirit that nobody wanted that he dissipated his power looking for popular formats.

Gary Giddins maintains that Ayler's synthesis 'blanched in a flower power compromise'. It blanched in something all right. It's a problem of our times.

Brian Case

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Brian Priestley looks at the influential **SIDNEY BECHET** (1897-1959) – the musician who defied all categorisation.

'JAZZ isn't just me. It isn't just any one person who plays it. There'll always be jazz. It doesn't stop with me, it doesn't stop anywhere.'

'You know, there's this mood about the music, a kind of need to be moving... You just can't keep the music unless you move with it.'

'All that happens to you makes a feeling out of your life and you play that feeling. But there's more than that. There's the feeling inside the music, too. And the final thing, it's the way those two feelings come together.'

'You know, when you learn something... there's not much else you can do unless you know how to get hold of something inside you that isn't learned.'

'That sort of conflict... kept [the white man] from the Negro's music, too. He didn't want it unless he could do it, too, do it better.'

'If a man can really play where the music is, he's entitled to all the personality they'll give him: but if the personality gets to come first, that's bad for the music.'

The story of jazz has often been recounted as a list of outstanding and influential soloists. Equally, but less frequently, it has been pointed out that, in practice, it's a series of ensemble styles – namely the classic New Orleans approach of King Oliver, the early Basie band, the Parker quintet etc. It may even be that jazz has needed the constant alternation and, indeed, tension between the two factors in order to survive and grow as it has.

Many musicians, it's true, have paid lip-service to the ensemble ideal while stomping all over it. But what is interesting is that many who genuinely believed in group equality, and even contributed towards it in some ways, also subverted it to their own ends. Mingus for one and, in his work of the past decade, Ornette Coleman. The quotations above from *Treat It Gentle* – the autobiography taped in the mid-Fifties by Sidney Bechet – show him as a lover of the collectivist, egoless New Orleans style and yet, for purely musical reasons, his playing ultimately removed him from that category.

Too little recognition

In other words, he fulfilled a similar role to Louis Armstrong but, when you consider how anyone interested in jazz acknowledges the importance of Armstrong, it's sad how little recognition is given to Bechet. The difference is partly that Louis's



Blues to BECHET

career lasted till the Seventies, when an overview of the whole of jazz was better understood than when Bechet died in the late Fifties. Bechet also played a then unfashionable instrument and had damaged his reputation in the US by lengthy periods in Europe – not only did he spend the last decade of his life based in Paris and make records in London, but it was here that he bought his soprano saxophone in 1919!

Of course, other things were happening by the late Fifties which should have guaranteed Bechet fame by association, if nothing else. For instance Steve Lacy, inspired by his hero's version of 'The Mooche', was setting out to become the first musician since Bechet to specialise on the soprano, while Coltrane (who even recorded a 'Blues to Bechet') actually succeeded in making the straight horn popular. But another 'miscellaneous instrumentalist', Eric Dolphy, was the one who mirrored the actual sound of Sidney: on bass-clarinets and to a lesser extent on alto, his fruity tone and unstoppable flow of notes can be heard as an updated version of Bechet at his best.

Majestic soprano work

To see Bechet's achievement in historical terms requires tuning your ears to Twenties' recording quality and performance practices, and especially the position

of the clarinet, the instrument on which he started out. According to the classic early records and spoken statements, the trumpet (or cornet, in those days) was the undisputed lead horn, with the clarinet playing a merely decorative part. Bechet's first recordings in 1923 such as 'Wild Cat Blues' show him using the saxophone as an expressive (and virtuosic) melodic lead some years before Coleman Hawkins discovered the same possibilities and, even when not taking the lead, his penetrating sound frequently takes the attention. This is true even on the mid-Twenties sessions where the cornetist is Louis Armstrong who, though hardly subdued by Bechet's seniority (probably as much as eight years), cannot match the power of the majestic soprano work.

Just how forward-looking Bechet's style was shows clearly in the 1932 band he organised called the New Orleans Feetwarmers. To be sure, it's a new Orleans line-up but the music sounds like a high-spirited cutting-contest, complete with the sort of backing riffs supposedly typical of the Swing Era and, under the title 'Shag', the first recorded improvisation based on 'I Got Rhythm'. And, in one extraordinary solo on 'I've Found A New Baby', Bechet's oblique lines and rhythmic looseness foreshadow Lester Young (there is no evi-

dence that their paths ever crossed but, as early as the late Twenties, records were becoming an influence on up-and-coming players and Lester was at the influenceable age of 23 when this one was cut).

Virtuosity and intimacy

It wasn't until 1938 that Bechet recorded under his own name and, though he never went as far out again, he frequently deviated from the traditional format. As well as sessions with Mezz Mezzrow which achieve a remarkable balance of virtuosity and intimacy, he showed an interest in exotic Afro rhythms which were also part of the New Orleans heritage, even recording a session billed as The Haitian Orchestra. And he applied his florid conception to a series of lush ballads like 'Summertime' and 'Strange Fruit', eventually augmented by Bechet originals including the famous 'Petite Fleur'. In this respect as well as his more up-tempo playing, it was Johnny Hodges who became his most famous disciple, and it's hardly surprising that Duke Ellington and Bechet were a mutual admiration society, with Sidney recording several Ellington tunes no one else dared touch, such as the aforementioned 'Mooche'.

Most other disciples have to be classed as revivalists, and they are few indeed compared to the hordes of clarinetists who followed Johnny Dodds or George Lewis. Among their number, Bob Wilber – who now fronts a group called The Bechet Legacy – does a good job of recreating the poised, romantic side of his mentor, while readers in the London area can get the occasional glimpse of Wally (Trog) Fawkes, who earned a personal mention in *Treat It Gentle* and who represents the rhythmic, riff-laden driving force that enabled Bechet to carry whole bands on his broad shoulders. For those who want to go straight to the records, the following appear to be immediately available:

'Wild Cat Blues' – Thomas Morris, 1923 (Fountain FJ113).

'Shag'/'I've Found A New Baby' – Complete Bechet Vols 1 & 2, 1932-41 (RCA PM42409).

'Summertime' – Jazz Classics Vol 1, 1939-46 (Blue Note BST81201).

Haitian Orchestra, 1939/In London, 1949 (Melodisc SMLP 12-174).

'Strange Fruit'/'The Mooche' – Complete Bechet Vols 3 & 4, 1941 (RCA PM43262).

With Mezz Mezzrow – *Le Grand Album de Bechet*, 1945-47 (Festival ALB139).

'Petite Fleur' – Sidney Bechet Vol 1, 1951-57 (Reactivation JR145).

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ZAHARA FLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT — AN 1011

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Antilles



ARCHIE SHEPP

by William

Archie Shepp: My first influence was my father who was a banjoist. He introduced me to the music of Basie and Ellington, and the great jazz soloists like Hershel Evans and Lester Young, Webster.

And then I credit the black community as an influence – the traditional folk music I heard as a boy growing up in Florida and Philadelphia, the blues, the shouts I heard in church, the battles of song which my grandmother often took me to hear. I think that reinforced my sensitivity to traditional African-American music form and particularly blues which I've always tried to make a contemporary aspect of my performance.

RS: *There has been quite a lot of controversy among your followers about your apparent return to playing around tunes and, particularly, bebop...*

AS: Well, actually, I don't use the term 'bebop'. I think it's a misnomer. Aside from its onomatopoeic sensationalism, the word tells us absolutely nothing about the music – that it's a fact that it's a transitional music that was played in the Forties and Fifties – that it's, perhaps, the beginning of the urban aesthetic, vis-à-vis the rural one as expressed by negro folk music...

So-called bebop is a very sophisticated music and the work of Parker and Gillespie, I think, was as fundamental as that of Bach in tempering the scale. When I teach my courses at school, I refer to this as the 'Baroque period' of African-American music because of its extreme complexity.

When we begin to look at our music as an entity, as a continuous phenomenon where each event, each change, is inter-related, it's understandable that I might dabble in earlier forms, just the way one might hear Horowitz play a piece of Debussy, some Bach and a contemporary piece. No one bats an eye then because everyone sees the continuity of Western classical music. I think it's chauvinistic that we refuse to see the continuity of African-American music.

Musicians become attached to certain periods of music and they refuse to let go. They expect that negroes should always remain the same because of the way they see them. Even the use of terms like 'bebop' and 'swing' exacerbate it because they don't tell us that this music has continuity or grows out of a continuum.

People like myself have been relegated to the certain fixed

musical enclaves, are expected to play like this all the time. I have noticed recently a burgeoning of white musicians who are very much into these forms, who are highly talented. For example, Scott Hamilton, and this group that's recreating the music of Bird.

Each time a new white performer emulates an earlier negro performer with success they are acclaimed. They're given money. But when blacks attempt to recreate their own forms they're castigated and criticised as being old-fashioned and so on. I think there is not only discrimination in this but it represents a subtly disguised way of stealing the negro's music.

RS: *I described you in a review once as an urban guerrilla of cultural hegemony, a freedom-fighter struggling to give a people back its history. Do you see yourself in that way?*

AS: I wouldn't describe myself as a freedom-fighter, but I am a fighter for freedom – I don't shoot guns at people!

RS: *Would you say you were a Marxist?*

AS: No... I'd say I'm a very concerned Afro-American. I say that because I think that Marxism is essentially a European experience. I am speaking now of its philosophy, and how it applies. Because, in a sense, I think it works much better in a Westernised occidental technological context than in a rural agrarian one, vis-à-vis Africa. And even China, where I think the experiment is not over.

RS: *Who would you say were the philosophical/political influences on your thinking?*

AS: Well, my father for one. My family first made me aware of the problems. My experience – having been born in the South, I was very early aware of the injustices that my people faced. In fact, I wrote my first political essay in the Third Grade – about 11 years old. I think it rather surprised my teacher!

RS: *You're a poet and a writer, as well as a jazz musician. I've noticed that a lot of African – especially South African – musicians are very concerned to work in a multi-media situation. But traditional jazz-buffs all too often consider it outside of the field...*

AS: I think whenever black people talk, it's threatening to those elements in society who are content to believe that negroes are essentially inarticulate except for rhythm. No matter where the negro artist comes from in the diaspora – Africa, Caribbean, or

US – we rather draw them into a kind of corner. I'm sure that if Peter Tosh wrote an opera, people would expect reggae.

When I wrote a play (it was produced just off Broadway), it was originally titled *The Communist* – but it was sub-titled a 'Jazz Allegory'. This epithet didn't originate from me, but from the producer in order to bring in more of an audience. I was known as a jazz musician. I was familiar with the work of Brecht and Kurt Weill – I was reasonably literate with the whole theatre repertory, going back to the Greeks if you will. I tried, of course, to incorporate my own black aesthetic into that and the music grew out of it. So, I was wrongly criticised, mainly for not having written jazz music, although that was not my intention.

I think probably other black artists are facing the same problems. People expect these guys to fulfil their fantasies, and they are disappointed when something original happens.

RS: *You were once described as a man who learned the saxophone backwards. There have been people – and, indeed, still are – who believed that the avant-garde was an excuse for musicians who couldn't play their instruments, didn't know the changes etc...*

AS: I've never felt that critics could arbitrate my own self-realisation. Even when I was frightened, I had conviction; I knew that even if my music wasn't right, my ideas were. And, ultimately, the music proved to be right. I've influenced a generation of players – of course, not only myself but people like Ayler, Coltrane. I think what we did in the Sixties has manifestly been proven profound. Even Miles Davis plays differently and, you know, he's doing a few things like we used to do in the Sixties. Things that he used to criticise us for!

RS: *Did you feel you reached a stage where you'd actually broken all the rules and had to return to form? Perhaps because one reaches a stage where the only way you can reinforce the impact of breaking the rules is to compare it or juxtapose those rules...*

AS: Yes! I think that's pretty near. I've often used the analogy of Picasso. His Blue and Rose period, and so on, when he re-examined classical form, and ultimately used that to launch a whole new tradition in art, of course underscored by the African sculpture that he had been introduced to at the time. But he



ARCHIE SHEPP is well known for his political views and insistence on the recognition of a black identity in jazz. A formidable musician, and an incisive intellectual he leaves nothing open to misinterpretation when making his point... as Rita Sanderson found out.

SHEPP is never coy when claiming cultural credit for the black community – yet, there is no aggression behind his words. Politics are stated with calm confidence, and a warm and humane disposition puts the visitor instantly at ease...

Rita Sanderson: *Well, to begin with a cliché, what were the most important influences on your musical development?*



Jan Kazy

the Continent is a unique experience for a black person, especially when one considers that the negro identity is quite evasive in the US. A black person can reform his or her sense of awareness in a very concrete way in Europe. There is an immense amount of racial discrimination here but it's certainly different from a cultural standpoint. Europeans tend to be more sensitive to nuance and differences in culture and are more willing to respect the integrity and authenticity of different cultures. Perhaps that's because Europe is much older than my country.

RS: *You've made quite a lot of albums with singers, and there is always a sense of working collectively with them, giving sensitive support and adding to the whole, unlike many front-line horn-players who often don't like to listen to singers*

AS: My concept comes out of an African aesthetic. It's said that in Africa all music is vocal music: even when it's played by instruments, the music is inspired by vocal events, and so the voice as a truly representative entity has been very important to me, both from the point of view of the way I play the saxophone, I do inflect vocally, and from the point of view of the theatre where I began to see how certain types of performance events could be put together. With words we are able to make much more immediate contact with people's sensibilities, simply because we communicate in words. So, vocal music is a very tangible element which helps to bring the audience more solidly into the music.

I think in that way some of my music in the Seventies was transitional. It might have helped the so-called 'fusion music' that developed later because some of these things that developed like 'Money Blues' and 'Attica Blues' were actually recorded, I believe, before Miles Davis made some of his later recordings - Jack Johnson and everything...

RS: *You teach Black Studies at Massachusetts University. Some would say that this is a bourgeois incorporation into the system - a way of castrating black anger, and buying off the black intellectuals*...

AS: Well, it could obviously be used that way. On the other hand, it's for the black community in the larger sense - and perhaps more specifically the negro intellectuals - to direct and monitor the authentic course of Black Studies.

My experience of white universities shows me that perhaps the

bastion of racism is the white-classical music department. Those music departments are, perhaps, the most reactionary when it comes to cross-cultural racial participation. They cling to definitions of classical and so on, these exclusive descriptions which patently proscribe anything but Western events.

It's my experience that we're working against enormous odds and historical factors. It isn't that Black Studies is a sell-out intentionally, but that is often the logical result of things because blacks are outnumbered and forced into an assimilative role. I think, perhaps, the weakness of Black Studies is that the negro intellectual himself, around the world, has really taken no serious position on negro culture - simply because they don't understand it in their studies in white schools.

For example - never does Black Studies take into consideration the creation of a viable music department or dance department when, in fact, music and dance are perhaps the most substantial events that have been participated in by blacks in the US and which have made the most impact on the world. Instead, they concentrate on History and Literature - phenomena which negroes have not particularly distinguished themselves in, and which essentially are white... which is why we end up with these textbook Marxists who know nothing about Buddy Bolden but who can tell you all about Engels!

In fact, one of the reasons I ultimately rejected Marxism was because of the phoney negroes I see espousing the doctrine. I don't mean that they're all phoney, I've met good Marxists who are black - but there are a substantial number who are quite bourgeois!

RS: *You mentioned the importance of the black contribution to dance*...

AS: Well, dance is an integral aspect of African-American music and pristine African music. It's not necessarily an integral aspect of Western music because Western music does not insist on the drum. I mean, people don't put their feet down on the ground to the beat, but rather to ideas, and they shape abstract images with dance in the West. But African-American music is a peculiar phenomenon - a kind of folk music that has evolved into an 'art music' (in the Western aesthetic concept).

What's peculiar about this music is that it still has many

roots in traditional form, even its insistence on dance. And when we get into forms like the so-called fusion music, they're excellent from the point of view of dance-inspired musical form; on the other hand, I think this new aesthetic which craves for fusion is somewhat subtly motivated by a Capitalist consumer society which seems to make everything the same - which shuns differences - which seeks to occidentalise the negro. I think disco music is essentially an assimilationist form, and perhaps its success rests on the fact that white people can also participate in it, whereas the converse might be true of so-called jazz music. Its demise, its death has been hastened by the fact that white people never participated in this music on a very successful level.

This is substantiated by Monk's statement in the Forties that we were trying to create something that the white boys couldn't do. And I think it's reflected in the rejection of Coltrane by many of his peers in the statement that he ultimately went too far away from jazz when, in fact, I think he was carrying out the mandate of Monk and the bebop-players that the music should become so esoteric that only its ritual followers could understand it.

RS: *Creating an elitism?*

AS: Not at all but rather re-defining, re-affirming an African-American identity. One which is totally uninfluenced, *tout à fait*, by the occidental musical form, that is Cosa Nostra - it's our thing!

RS: *Well, I'm very glad you're happy to share that thing with everyone.*



Jan Kazy

was certainly cognisant of the need and perhaps this is a very important period in any artist's life when he or she is involved in a creative quest that they do at some point re-examine the most classical elements of the form in order to refine technique.

RS: *Do you think Paris influenced you to make all those beautiful lyrical and melodic albums in the late Seventies?*

AS: That's interesting - no one ever asked that one before! Well, I wouldn't say just Paris. Every city has its own charisma. London can be a bit stiff but once you get to know it, it's rather a nice city.

When I was here, I think I was as much affected and inspired by the charisma of this town as I would have been in Paris or Copenhagen. Certainly, being on

In the second part of our ARCHIE SHEPP feature, Barry McRae delves into the tenorist's background and explains why this influential and individualistic musician remains a force in the changing world of jazz.

ARCHIE SHEPP is a complex man whose artistic talents are channelled into education, literature, poetry, politics and theatre as well as music. What concerns us here is his music and, most particularly, the diversification that takes him from the stance of avid experimentalist to conscious conservative.

His beginnings were unexceptional. As a child he studied piano, clarinet and alto, switching to tenor at school and using the bigger horn on his first job at the age of 15. This was with Karl Rodgers and His Jolly Ramblers, an r&b band, introducing him to the commercial blues circuit. Unfortunately, it was not a long association. He found the music stultifying and, in 1959 at the age of 22, he moved to New York to improve his musical lot.

A job in a coffee bar led to his introduction to Cecil Taylor, but no important chapters in the Shepp story were written by this musical affiliation with the pianist. They first recorded in 1960¹, shortly after they met, but the tenorman, still only 23, was far from happy. 'I wasn't ready for this music but I tackled it and did my best,' he confessed at a later date but, apart from a strong, coherent solo on 'Lazy Afternoon'² his uncertainty was confirmed on record.

The formative years

At the time, the Fort Lauderdale man was best described as a diffident post-bop man, whose style came from John Coltrane. Leroy Jones supported that theory and dubbed him 'post Trane' but in a style still inchoate in important details, Shepp made use of motivic development in the Rollins manner, his timing owed something to the swing-era giants, and he got much of his sound from the experience with the Ramblers.

Shepp and Taylor worked together as actors/players in the stage play, *The Connection*. Their musical progress, however, was more accurately documented by an Impulse record date almost exactly one year after their first effort. Despite contentions in some circles, it hardly marked a

'coming together' and Shepp seemed torn between trying to match his leader's pianistic angularity, as he does on 'Pots'³, or rolling his blues-based phrases roughshod over the contours of a title like 'Bulls'⁴. Whatever the approach, Taylor was not convinced that their partnership could progress, and shortly after this date he gave notice to his young tenor sideman.

Despite this, Shepp still cites Taylor as one of his chief mentors and, although one is tempted to see the influence as more attitudes of mind, it did break down barriers of orthodoxy. This apart, there was little evidence of the Taylor ethic in Shepp's music of the time and in 1961, when he co-led a quartet with trumpeter Bill Dixon, he looked for his inspiration elsewhere. The impact of Ornette Coleman was being felt throughout the jazz world at the time and Shepp's playing seemed to occupy an area that was stylistically, if not chronologically, somewhere between Rollins and Coleman.

His ideas were not built away from the theme with the logic that was Coleman's, and there was occasionally a disjointed quality as a solo evolved. Nevertheless, a title like 'Trio'⁵, while ignoring the principles of free association, showed that the tenorman could make a virtue of this apparent shortcoming. Staying close to the original melody, he followed the thematic curves rather than try to redesign them, and this was to prove the basis of his style. It was one that he was never to desert totally as a formula for performance.

The quartet remained together until 1963, although towards the end of that period they were often augmented by Danish-born altoist John Tchicai. When Dixon left the group shortly afterwards, some observers talked of a Jimmie Noone/Joe Poston up-date⁶. This never transpired but the two men did become permanent companions in the summer of 1963 when they came together as part of the New York Contemporary Five.⁵⁴

Insight into defiant rhythms

Although he never actually played with them, Dixon was involved in the founding of the group. More important, he was also of immense help to the fast-maturing Shepp, both in playing and his composing. In fact, the Five was a natural progression of the Dixon/Shepp Quartet and it showed, for the first time, a

genuine confidence of execution from Shepp and gave us our first insight into the defiant rhythms that became his trademark. There was no neutrality, it was a style that was hard and driving, and yet there was just a hint of frivolity, an element consistent with the underlying romanticism that the Shepp style was to carry effortlessly for the rest of his career. It was almost as if it had all come together on one concerted explosion of self realisation. Playing that was swaggeringly convulsive was matched by writing that could only have come from the same man.

He was suddenly a man in demand and yet, ironically, he never seemed to function as effectively in another stable. With the Jazz Composers Orchestra he never seemed totally aware of his ensemble role and, despite an outstanding solo, he contributed little else to Coltrane's magnificent *Ascension*.

Surprisingly, his own work was beginning to exhibit an increasing sense of organisation. Largely due to the patronage of John Coltrane, Shepp landed a recording date in 1964 that was to prove something of a landmark for him. In due deference, Shepp re-worked four Coltrane compositions, but in so doing showed himself to be an arranger more than cognisant of the special needs of a sextet. 'Syedda's Song Flute'⁷ and 'Cousin Mary'⁸, in particular, demonstrate how he could promote an initial mood, then nurture his soloists with backgrounds that were both sympathetic and muscular. His command of the idiom had already become such that it was a natural extension of his tenor style, and it was presented with an equilibrium and emotional restraint that

was completely in concert.

What also emerged at that time was the fact that Shepp was not easily wooed by other composers. 'Prelude To A Kiss' was to be the first of a string of dedications to Duke Ellington, declaring not only his devotion to the man but also an acceptance of his own love of rhetorical embellishment as a means of progressing a total work. Such efforts were symptomatic of the inherent conservatism already noted, but not all ballads were accorded the same treatment. An item such as 'Girl From Ipanema'⁹, with which he was not enamoured, was subjected to a ruthlessly satirical examination and this form of snub was reserved for any material that he thought deserved it.

By the middle Sixties, Shepp was leading mainly quintets and sextets, in the company of kindred spirits such as vibist Bobby Hutcherson, trombonists Roswell Rudd and Grachan Moncur III. He was writing more and proving himself to be a composer of many moods. One has only to compare the folksy charm of 'The Original Mr Sonny Boy Williamson', the Broadway strut of 'Wherever June Bugs Go', the simple riff structure of 'Fiesta' and the bluesy overtones of 'Mama Too Tight' to appreciate the extent of his prowess.

The total Shepp concept continued to evolve, however, and at the 1967 British Jazz Expo, he confronted us with a quintet performance of almost totally contrapuntal jazz. A sop to his romanticism was made by the interpolation of a token ballad and he engineered an unexpected climax with a simplistic brass-band march section. It was a formula that he had established in 'Por-



trait of Robert Thompson¹⁰) and which reached its most perfected form with *One For The Trane*¹¹. The polyphony was wild and superficially undisciplined but the tenor line remained its dominant factor and it was argued in some circles that its motivation was emotional as much as ethereal.

Ironically, it was Europe that played a major part in the next stage of the story, when in 1969 the nomadic Shepp came into contact with ex-patriot Chicaogans in Paris. He had always shown atavistic inclinations himself and their concern with blues and the roots of the music became increasingly reflected in his work. It was a very productive liaison and yet, surprisingly it was a record that teamed him with hard-bopper Hank Mobley that marked something of a high-water mark. The masterful 'Rain Forest'¹² proved to be a summation of his music thus far and must be considered as one of the consummate tenor performances in all jazz history.

Disregarding Western tradition
On the debit side, the late Sixties saw Shepp attempting to introduce an element of Africanism into his presentation. The uniform he dismissed as 'theatre' but he was at length to point out that his whole outlook was a way of 'disregarding the Western tradition all together'. In its extreme form, it was a short-lived obsession but it was not one that really added much of aesthetic value to his music. In fact, the recordings made live in the streets at the Pan African Festival¹³ in Algiers did little more than underline the failure of this attempted stylistic synthesis. When he returned to America he did at least relate to some of this ethnic exposure and, on certain dates, he used lead and choral voices in support of his horns, but this was to be a short-lived departure.

Strangely enough, after this period of renewed but somewhat abortive experimentation in the early Seventies, Shepp reduced his musical activities drastically and returned to a career as college professor, teaching at two eminent East Coast universities.

This was a major step and he did not return to full-time music until the mid-Seventies. When he did, however, there was a considerable change of emphasis in his style. Some critics actually saw him playing at Montreux in 1975 as a personal compromise and as evidence that he was playing what critics wanted to hear. Anyone who had even the

most casual contact with him will dismiss this suggestion immediately, and be more inclined to accept his statement that he felt it incumbent on him to present a one-man history of the tenor saxophone.

Again a current attitude was summed up in one musical statement, made at the East/West Festival at Nuernberg¹⁴. It found Shepp playing with great authority and it gave a clear guide to the way in which he had simplified his jazz in terms of harmonic movement. Furthermore, it gave credence to the theory that his style had always been a logical development from the music of the Rollins school, with its policy of motivic breakdown within the structural parameters already laid down.

The voracious experimentalist

In view of his new aspirations, it was not surprising that he should polish up on his bebop lingo, and Parker and Monk items began to creep into his repertoire. To some, such a policy might indicate entrenchment but, when the mood took and the time was right, Shepp showed that he still had the capacity to be a voracious experimentalist. At the 1979 Willis Festival, he stretched his musical horizons in the company of Max Roach, while at a 1982 concert at Villingen he showed no fear at the thought of relating to the electronic challenge of Jasper Van't Hof. This is typical of the man and was again proof that his was a continually evolving tradition.

Today, Shepp is almost an establishment figure. At his best he is an effusive musician, not happy to take ascetic routes. He has always traded in overstatement and done so with an unashamed romanticism that could account for the fact that his stylistic inspiration to other jazzmen has carried slightly less impact. What remains evident is that he is an individualist as a player, composer and arranger, and that today he remains a force in the changing world of jazz.

Italian critic Nico Valerio summed it up succinctly when he said, 'Less brilliant than Ornette Coleman, less original than John Coltrane, Shepp is a "man-age" ... a symbol of all post-Parkerian jazz'. Few could argue with that. ■

ARCHIE SHEPP – Selective Reviews

Maple Leaf Rag (Fluid 104)

Recorded: Paris – 14th July, 1978.

Side One: 'Maple Leaf Rag'; 'A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing'; 'Lift Every Voice And Sing'; 'Chelsea Bridge'. *Side Two:* 'EVA "In Memoriam"'; 'Lush Life'; 'The Scene Is Clean'.

Archie Shepp (p); Herman Wright (b); Clifford Jarvis (d).

Poem For Malcolm (Affinity AFF 78)

Recorded: Paris – 14th August, 1969.

Side One: 'Mamarose'; 'Poem For Malcolm'.

Archie Shepp (ss/v); Burton Greene (p); Alan Silva (b); Claude Delcoo (d); Philly Joe Jones (perc). *Side Two:* 'Rain Forest'; 'Oleo'.

Archie Shepp (ts/p); Hank Mobley (ts); Grachan Moncur III (tb); Vince Benedetti (p); Malachi Favors (b); Philly Joe Jones (d).

Mama Rose (SteepleChase SCS 1169)

Recorded: Villingen – 5th February, 1982.

Side One: 'Contracts'; 'Mama Rose'. *Side Two:* 'Pipo'; 'Kalimba'; 'Recovered Residence'.

Archie Shepp (ts/ss/voc); Jasper Van't Hof (org/el p/synth/p/kalimba).

These three records – one an important re-issue – cover a period of nearly 13 years. They also cover the wide stylistic range discussed in the feature article. To appreciate their inter-relationship it is perhaps instructive to

consider first the 1978 date. On this, Shepp plays only piano and, as is often the case when a hornman sits at a keyboard, he presents a blueprint for his total style. Predictably, the album shows him to be harmonically less audacious than on saxophone, even if the details of his solos are more florid. He stifles any suggestion that he might be a genuine primitive because he needs, and has, the technique to accommodate his inherent romanticism.

The return to 1969 reminds us that at the time Shepp did not always record with sidemen of equal stature. The slender talents of Delcoo and Green are hardly ideal, and too little is heard of Mobley for him to be considered a real asset. For all its limitations, however, this record contains 'Rain Forest', one of Shepp's finest ever performances. Virtually unaccompanied, it shows the tenor's ability to build a free solo from the most meagre starting point, into an impressive edifice of melodic detail.

The 1982 date appropriately takes Shepp into the electronic world. Van't Hof's best solo is not on the acoustic instrument on 'Recovered' but he is also a sympathetic duetist and he provides a wide range of keyboard support figures. Shepp reacts to each challenge differently, raunchy on 'Pipo' and at his most exploratory on 'Contracts'.

He is now a spokesman for tenor history and these three records offer a good cross section of the Shepp output. Ironically, readers with limited budgets will probably buy the worst, on the strength of 'Rain Forest'.

BMcR



(1) *Candide* CJS 9006, (2) *Impulse* AS 9, (3) *Savoy* MG 12178, (4) *Fontana* 681 014 ZL, (5) *Polydor* 623 267, (6) *Real Gone* 52422, (7) *Impulse* A71, (8) *Impulse* A 86, (9) *Impulse* STPL 508, (10) *Polydor* 583 732, (11) *Affinity* AFF 78, (12) *Affinity* AFF 41, (13) *Enja* 2076.

PICTURES FROM GÉRARD ROUY



Lindsay Cooper, Moers 1982

Gérard Rouy worked as a photographer and writer for *Jazz Magazine* in France from 1970 and as a freelance in the French press since 1977. He has had exhibitions in France, Berlin, Antwerp and Wuppertal.

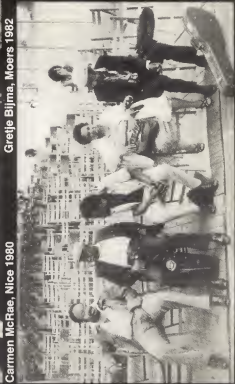


Melha Liston, Nice 1980



Carmen McRae, Nice 1980

Gretje Bljma, Moers 1982



Tamla, Pisa 1981



NARDIS

Jack Mitchell reflects on the much-loved and influential piano genius.

BILL EVANS REMEMBERED

Ronnie Scott's, one hot Saturday night early in August 1980, where the Bill Evans Trio are winding up a two-week engagement in an atmosphere of attentive quiet.

Four visits had meant enduring eight sets of a more than usually vapid girl singer (judicious programming has never been the

club's strong point) and even, on one night, a lecture recital by guitarist John Williams. But it had been worth it. This most introverted of players – bearded, stooping, with something of the remoteness of a Klemperer – had palpably changed. The head still fell closer and closer to the

keyboard the more he became involved, the face turned away from the audience, but Bill Evans no longer seemed quite so enclosed within his own world. The sound he drew from the Steinway was as round and full as ever, the dynamics just as subtly shaded; but there was more of a freely improvised quality than we were used to, a sense of daring within the security of a technique one takes for granted. 'Acquire your technique, then forget it', Evans once said, and he rarely smudged a note in public.

Primeval power

To enthusiasts the Evans book is familiar, albeit extensive. But tonight we found ourselves surprised by 'Time Remembered', 'Turn Out The Stars', 'Re: Person I Knew' and the reworking of favourite ballads like 'My Foolish Heart' and 'If You Could See Me Now'. The last set, as usual of late, closed with Miles Davis's 'Nardis'. Played differently each night, the extended introduction pushed deep into the bass keys, it was wild, free. One felt there an almost primeval power, yet the classically nurtured poise never for a moment faltered. What Bill must have known, and his rapt audience didn't, was that he hadn't long to live. 'Nardis' was the last number he ever played, at Fat Tuesday's, New York, just a few days before he died on 15th September. The young pianist Richard Beirach was there: 'He played the tune in time, and it was 32 bars, but he was breaking into another vocabulary. It sounded more like Schoenberg and Berg, but with a jazz feel. I couldn't believe it. I will always remember that.'

The twilight zone

I must confess to being slow in appreciating this pianist, first hearing him some 20 years ago in *Conversations With Myself*. This was the time of Philip Larkin's



John Kelly

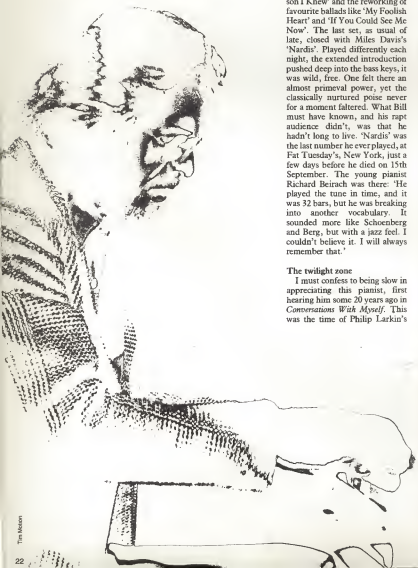
Annus Mirabilis ('Between the end of the *Chatterley* ban and the Beatles' first LP'). Jazz was passing through one of its twilight zones, the bop revolution long spent and the rock explosion yet to burst. *Conversations*, with its three overdubbed pianos, won a Grammy award; but the texture sounded – and still sounds – heavy and clotted, and the effort unnecessary considering what the man could do on unaccompanied solo piano. I was pleased to hear recently in a taped interview that he agreed. The true conversational style had already been achieved within the trio – piano, bass and drummer – and never can a leader have taken such pains in finding the right partners.

After the initial experiments, the first great trio happened all too briefly, between 1959 and 1961, with Scott La Faro on bass and Paul Motian drums. The brilliant, extroverted La Faro, overflowing with ideas he could scarcely control, made the perfect foil for the thoughtful Evans. The combination reached its apogee in *The Village Vanguard Sessions* of 1961, which remains one of the best albums and was Evans's own favourite. In ballad treatments, the tempo is often languid, the harmonies soft-focused though moving unpredictably, the touch light and firm. The melody lines are unfailingly smooth but irregularly broken. The song form, always the favourite vehicle, is expanded and virtually recomposed. Ten days after the date, La Faro was killed in a car crash and a musical crisis was precipitated. It took five years to find a comparable partner in Eddie Gomez, who stayed for 12 years.

The early days

Born in 1929, Bill Evans played piano from an early age and was always a good sight-reader, though on his own admission he couldn't play 'My Country 'Tis Of Thee' without the music in front of him, and on early high-school gigs, the bass player had to call out the chord changes for him.

He studied piano and flute at South-Eastern Louisiana College, graduating in 1950 and, after being drafted, playing flute in an army band for three years. There were gigs in the evenings



and he wrote his first piece, 'Very Early'. After discharge he was kept busy, playing with Herbie Fields, Red Mitchell, Tony Scott, George Russell, Mingus, and quickly became known as a pianist of great fluency and polish. Undemonstrative, he had by now developed a phenomenal ear and a quiet authority that could draw the listener into his world. And it was a new world. I think it no exaggeration to say that Bill Evans has been the only white musician to exert a major influence on jazz. There have been great white players, to be sure, but they have tended to be followers rather than leaders. This is borne out to some extent by the occasional snide comments of black musicians – of the lesser sort, I hasten to add, not those of the calibre of Miles or Cannonball. The pale, bespectacled young man must have cut an odd figure in the Miles Davis band of 1958, but during his six months with them the music markedly changed direction. The experiments with the modal scale were a joint enterprise, and it would be futile to seek to identify the contributions of Miles and Bill. But Evans is now acknowledged as the pioneer of modal jazz piano, a concept that has since become universal.

Full maturity

The recorded legacy is extensive, somewhere in the region of 60 albums, besides a quantity of material in the Bill Evans Memorial Library (Brian Hennessey, 6 Milton Lawns, Chesham Bois, Amersham, Bucks). The first under his own name, *New Jazz Conceptions* (1956), shows him already fully mature. More aggressive than anything that followed, the Bud Powell-ish attack accentuated by the rather rough mono sound, one feels that he would like to relax more but can't bring himself to let go. The figures, however, are absolutely sure and the harmonic substitutions thoroughly researched. In the last Village Vanguard sessions of 1980 (due for release later next year on the Elektra label) he is recognisably the same man, but one who has been developing inwardly for a quarter of a century. Interesting comparisons can be made: with McCoy Tyner, for instance. In his early solo recordings we hear the young McCoy, already a finished pianist, clear and firm of hand, imaginative, yet tentative somehow, with the sense of creative barriers still to be breached. And, in sharp contrast, there's Oscar Peterson, the prodigy of 1949 sounding much as he does today, though with precious little to show in the way of musical development over three decades.

Among the later albums, I would single out *Bill Evans At Town Hall* (1966), with the remarkable extended improvisation in memory of his father; *Alone* (1968), a rare solo performance with another long, ruminative extemporisation on the ballad 'Never Let Me Go'; *Intuition* (1974), a duo with Eddie Gomez on bass, one of the few of his recordings that he liked to listen to. There are other interesting performances, two with guitarist Jim Hall and two with singer Tony Bennett, but if I had to settle for just one it would have to be *The Bill Evans Album* (CBS 1971). The trio (Eddie Gomez and Marty Morrell) is here augmented by electric piano for the first time. Used sparingly, it adds tonal colour and, in the leader's hands, acquires a personal sound. All seven tracks are Evans originals, including the best known, 'Waltz For Debbie'; 'Re: Person I Knew' (anagram for Orrin Keepnews, his first producer); 'The Two Lonely People', my own particular favourite, and 'T.T.T.' (Twelve-Tone Tune). This is the first of two experiments with a twelve-note row, grafting it on to a diatonic foundation, a procedure once used by Bartók in his *Second Violin Concerto*. A tall order, and Evans's considerable harmonic vocabulary has never been deployed with such resource. By the use of chromatic displacements and constructions of fourths, an obscured tonal language is ingeniously created. Furthermore, it swings.

A Michelangeli of jazz

Jazz, like any live art, escapes any attempt at definition. But André Hodeir's description of the jazz function is helpful: 'An inseparable but extremely variable mixture of relaxation and tension.' Bill Evans realised this in the highest degree. If Art Tatum was the Horowitz of jazz, Evans could reasonably be compared with Michelangeli for seamless technique and beauty of tone. Of those who followed him only Herbie Hancock. I think, has approached his standards of pianism. He is unlikely to find much favour with the Real Ale school of jazz fans; the man least likely to run his thumbnail down the keyboard. But neither is he merely for the *cognoscenti*; the audiences showed that, and these grew younger as the public turned again to jazz.

Those of us lucky enough to have heard him live must be thankful, but he was an artist who seemed happy to record under most conditions and a good number of his albums are still available from once source or another. ■



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The series which looks at the business-end of the music. In this issue, *The Wire* explores an underrated but essential aspect of jazz behind-the-scenes – film.

Notes from a Jazz Film Maker

DON MCGLYNN produced and directed the acclaimed, poignant documentary film *Art Pepper: Notes From A Jazz Survivor* which was released here in January. Terry Hulme looks at the background and motivation.

McGLYNN's London visit was fleeting, heading for New York to talk to Warner Marsh about filming him this year.

Born 27 years ago in Minneapolis (but now a Los Angeles resident), McGlynn has two main



Don McGlynn

passions – Film and Jazz. With award-winning films already under his belt, the Pepper project was his first shot at combining the two forms. This successful mix will not be McGlynn's sole venture into jazz film and, in presenting the music as the expression of a perceivable human-being, we could well have a potential leader in the medium.

McGlynn is also that rare cultural animal – a presenter of the jazz form to uninvolved souls. I have seen the film many times, by choice. The first showing was filled with film-biz – both genders and various ages – and the after-

math conversation revolved around the film's emotional impact on people who had not known who Pepper was (or that he had since died) and, in many instances, had stated a previous dislike of jazz.

Conversely, the film was shown in one of America's toughest prisons – at Pepper's request for a still-incarcerated friend – and they dug it, too. There is a spot, from the bottom line up, where the heart can be felt, and that's the hitting spot. This film has it.

I wondered what prompted the film – the autobiography *Straight Life*, or the music?

Emotional response

'The first element I was aware of was the music,' says McGlynn. 'I started to really appreciate him when he started making newer records, I was responding on a very emotional level to a lot of albums, in particular *Art Pepper Today*. I found the version of "Patricia" on it very moving. On the cover was this face that looked like it had been through so much. There was so much in that face. That's what did it.'

'I visualised the "Patricia" number, as I heard it on the record, in terms of how I would move the camera in one take... and then I decided, "Enough of this masturbatory visualisation; it's time to do it".'

'Originally, I thought it would be great to make a performance film but, seeing that face, I went – "There's a story in that man". Every piece of the puzzle kept falling in as I read the book, and then – when I was about halfway through – I said, "I can't wait any more...".

'The next time they played in public, I went up to Laurie Pepper and said, "I'm interested in

making a film about your husband's life – a performance film", and she said, "We're open to other types of projects". She referred to it as "new endeavours".

Strangely prophetic

'I went to the house and Art was expecting me. He answered the door with this ventral hernia showing. I was stunned. The immediate image that popped into my mind was from *Alien*. You know, that monster that jutted out of that guy's stomach. I said what I wanted to do. It was strangely prophetic what I brought up – "There are no films of you. You're great, and you should be filmed". I think I reminded him that Charlie Parker had only five minutes of performance footage that I knew of, and I thought it was really important. He interrupted me and said, "I'd love to do the film"...'.

Agreement was possibly an achievement, but actually making the film was a bigger one. How did McGlynn approach it, and were there any problems?

'I said to Laurie, "Look, Art is nervous about this. I think I should go to the apartment every day and just talk to him and record it, so if there is something useful, we can use it...". By the time we were in there with a camera, he was utterly relaxed – which is no mean feat – and I think he's totally responsible for that.

Understanding the person

'The thing I wanted to say at the beginning is, he's a heroin addict, he's a musician – a great musician. And I wanted it to be clear that he had a relationship with his wife. As the film unfolds, we understand him as a person. We understand in the first number where his music is coming from. We understand the anguish he goes through before the performance, how he feels about his fellow musicians. But, right after that number's over, we try to take a journey into what makes him tick emotionally. I was hoping that people would have more of, a feeling for him, and the depths of how emotional he is; how he did feel about his daughter (that he wasn't able to express), and how he ended up expressing it with his wife.

'The only difficulty was "Our Song". We filmed it twice. The first time, Art talked all through it. Not everything he said was important. We filmed it again and I said, "Art, just keep your mouth shut". What you see is sort of an amalgamation of the two and, if anything, I kinda like it because he's so understated.

'The only thing that upsets me is, about a month before, he put on "Stardust", on the Artists



Art Pepper



Art Pepper

House label. He was all over the place – his head was, like, going at 180 degree angles, back and forth, and his eyes were just rolling in his head. I was sitting there, looking at him, going – “If I can get anything like that on film ...”. Unfortunately, I never did.”

I wondered how much music McGlynn had from shooting the film?

“We shot 33 minutes of music. On a slight edit in the first number, “Red Car”, “Patricia” – a tiny cut on Milcho’s solo, and a bit at the end cut off. The final version is cut by almost a minute and a half, but that’s where the credits are. One of the only complaints Art had – and he got over it really quickly – was, “You should have had that whole number at the end”. I have some more footage of Art conducting a sax clinic. Probably 10 to 15 minutes – a duet with Milcho Leviev; a very nice blues and “Rhythm-a-ning”. As far as I know, this is the only film of Art. There are a few television appearances, and who knows where they exist?”

As the film was completed only three months before Pepper’s death, how did McGlynn now view Pepper’s playing style and ability?

The personal voice

“There’s a great technical control very early on. It was fresh, direct, and with a lot of spirit. Then he fell into – and he’s admitted it – the influence by Coltrane, and I still heard it sneaking in towards the end of his life. But I do think he has a very personal voice. Some people say he comes out of Lester Young. I don’t buy that. He’s got a much harder edge than Lester. I know Art really liked Lester, but the

tone of it and approach, to me, seemed really different. I would say the albums he made earlier were more consistent. He put out so many in his later life but when he hit with a song in the later part of his career, it was stronger than anything else he ever did.

“His playing became more emotional, and had a lot more texture, mainly because of his good relationship with Laurie, and that’s what I tried to put forth in the movie. I think he was like a hot-house plant, because finally he was loved for what he was. I hear people say that he was a tough son-of-a-bitch, was uncooperative, and an egomaniac. He was an egomaniac, but he was great. He was also a very sweet guy, and was very funny. What I got on film was the way I always saw him.”

The film views Art as a person, who also happens to be a jazz musician, and McGlynn’s comments never strayed far from that base. I wondered how he viewed Pepper’s spirits and general health, bearing in mind the turmoil Art had been through?

The anger, the catharsis

“You’ve got to realise that the book came mainly from a period when he wasn’t playing. There was a lot of anger in him when he was reciting the tapes. The way I see it, the book was cathartic for him, and then – in the midst of the tapings – he began to play and record as a leader. He was doing things like playing sax for bar-mitzvahs and weddings, which was very demoralising, and a lot of the taping was done then.

“About the time of the printing of the book was one of the most lucrative periods of his life. I don’t think he was making a huge amount of money but he was doing well. He had everything he

wanted. He was very much a “home body” and, on occasion, he would mess up. He would go crazy with cocaine, or with heroin again, and I asked Laurie if that was very often, and she said, “No”. When we were doing the film, he was very good; he was well behaved, he never smoked, he never drank.

“You know, things happen ...”

“When he was doing the “Our Song” recording session, he was popping vitamins left and right ...

He said in the film, “Every time I play might be the last time, which isn’t trying to be melodramatic but, you know, things happen”. He knew he was on borrowed time. The only mystery to me is that one time in a recording studio was the best I’d ever seen him look, and a month and a half later he was dead. The urgency of the last moment of being around and being creative was bringing it there. The publicity he was getting – it was really strong – the resource in interest in his career, I think, was what did it for him at the end.”

To retain the original title for the film seemed strange; leastways, I thought so until I saw it, whereupon I reverted to considering it perfect.

The jazz survivor

“It’s a sort of chronicle of where he was right then, and up until that point he did survive, and that’s what the point of the movie is.

“If all goes well, I’m going to be writing *The Art Pepper Life Story* as a dramatic script. I’m not sure exactly how we would work it out; Laurie and I may collaborate on it.”

To round off the conversation, I wondered if there was anything left unsaid. Seemingly, there was ...

“Laurie asked me to say a few words at the funeral and I didn’t do it. But, if I’d gone up during the eulogy, I would have said, “Look, I only knew Art the last couple of years of his life, and I know the story. I read the book, and I’m familiar with the problems he had, but one thing that everybody should know is, he went out happy because every moment I saw him, he was funny. He seemed to be in good spirit. He had a nice marriage with his wife – the romance he always wanted, he finally had.”

“I’m sorry I didn’t say it because it would be a good thought for people to leave the funeral with ...”

A good thought, indeed. ■

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OF THE YEAR

DOLPHY DISCOG - RAPHY PART 2

We are pleased to present Part 2 of this previously unpublished Eric Dolphy discography, compiled by ERIK GERRITSEN.

Acknowledgement goes to Barry Tepperman and *Down Beat* magazine. Grateful thanks to Anthony Wood, Stephen Barrow and David Hogan.

In July 1961, Dolphy and Booker Little began playing at the Five Spot Cafe in New York, which produced: ERIC DOLPHY/BOOKER LITTLE QUINTET: LIVE AT THE FIVE SPOT, VOL 1 (Prestige New Jazz NJLP8260); VOL 2 (Prestige 7294); VOL 3 (Prestige 7334); Five Spot, NY City, 16/7/1961.

Eric Dolphy (as,fl,bcl); Booker Little (tp); Mal Waldron (pno); Richard Davis (bs); Ed Blackwell (dr).

Aggression; Like Someone in Love; Free Waltz; Ben Vamp; The Prophet; Number Eight; Booker's Waltz.

'Number Eight' is also called 'Potsa Lota'. Two other tracks were recorded, 'Status Seeking' and 'God Bless the Child', the latter being an unaccompanied bass clarinet solo by Dolphy, one of three versions of this on record. These two tracks were later released on *Here & There* (Prestige 7382), along with the missing track 'April Fool' from the *Outward Bound* session, as well as an alternative take from the later *Live in Europe* recordings. Vol 1 and Vol 2 have been reissued as Prestige 7611 and 7826, respectively. Vol 3 has retained its original number, but has been reissued as *The Memorial Album*, as Booker Little died four months after these recordings, and, by the time it was reissued, Dolphy had also died it.

The three volumes also appear in a nicely presented box set entitled *The Great Concert of Eric Dolphy* (Prestige PR34002). Selections have also been released (along with later selections from the *Live in Europe* recordings) on a Prestige (twofer by Dolphy entitled *Status Seeking* (Prestige PR24070). Loads of intensity on these albums, and a must for any Dolphy fan.

Dolphy next appeared on a Max Roach album:

MAX ROACH & HIS ORCHESTRA: PERCUSSION BITTER SWEET (Impulse AS8; NY City, 1,3,8,9/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,fl,bcl); Booker Little (tp); Clifford Jordan (ts); Julian Priester (trb); Mal Waldron (pno); Art Davis (bs); Max Roach (dr); Carlos Valdez (cong); Carlos Eugenio (cowbell); Abbey Lincoln (vcl).

'Gowley's Ghost'; Mendacity; Mama; Tender Warriors; Prone for a Martyr; Man from South Africa.

§Dolphy does not solo on these selections.

There is a particularly effective alto solo from Dolphy behind Lincoln's vocal on 'Mendacity'.

There now appears an oddity. The next album was apparently recorded some time in 1961, presumably before Dolphy went to Europe, although this is not certain. It may have been from a radio broadcast, or perhaps taped by a member of the audience. Whatever, the sound quality is rather poor. The line-up is odd, too:

ERIC DOLPHY QUARTET: ERIC DOLPHY QUARTET 1961 (Jazz Connoisseur JC107; location unknown, probably NY City, 1961).

Eric Dolphy (bc); LaLo Schaffrin (pno); Bob Cunningham (bs); Mel Lewis (dr).

On Green Dolphin Street; Softly as a Summer Sunrise; The Way You Look Tonight.

Presumably 'Softly as a Summer Sunrise' should read 'Softly as in a Morning Sun'. This album is available in Britain on Italian import, and is thought to be part of a broadcast in Philadelphia. One further track, 'Title Unknown', appears on 3 Dolphy Groups (Unique Jazz UJ26) with the same personnel.

Shortly after the Max Roach sessions, Dolphy went to Europe for the second time, but this time alone. He was in Berlin at the end of August to record several radio broadcasts, eventually released as:

ERIC DOLPHY: THE BERLIN CONCERT (Easa 307+9; Funkarm Exhibition Hall, Berlin; Club 'Jazz-Saloon', Berlin, 30/8/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,fl,bcl); Benny Bailey (trp); Josef Auer (pno); George Joyner (bs); Buster Smith (dr).

Hot House; When Lights Are Low; GW; God Bless the Child; Hi-Fly; The Meeting; I'll Remember April.

This album is also available on Inner City 3017. Dolphy also made a television broadcast with this group on the same day, as well as jamming with various members of the Humphrey Lytton Orchestra(?) at which was recorded for a later radio broadcast.

A week later, Dolphy was recorded in Copenhagen by Prestige:

ERIC DOLPHY: IN EUROPE, VOL 1 (Prestige 7304; Vol 2 Prestige 7350; Vol 3 Prestige 7366; Bopkale Has, Copenhagen, 6-9/1961; Studentenforeningen Foredragssal, Copenhagen, 8/9/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,fl,bcl); Bent Axen (pno); Erik Moseholm (bs); Jørn Elmi (dr); Chuck Israels (trb).

Hi-Fly; Glad to be Unhappy; God Bless the Child; Les: Oleo; Don't Blame Me; The Way You Look Tonight; When Lights Are Low; Laura; Woody'n'You; In the Blues (3 takes). All three takes of 'In the Blues' appear consecutively on Vol 3 (Prestige 7366).

The track 'Les' is erroneously labelled as 'Miss Ann' on all sleeves and labels of Vol 2 (Prestige 7350). Two takes of 'Miss Ann' were recorded, but have never been released.

'Hi-Fly' is a duet by Dolphy and bassist Chuck Israels, who was in town with the Jerome Robbins ballet company.

These recordings contain the best of the three known versions of 'God

Bless the Child' - a veritable Meisterwerk!

A second take of 'Don't Blame Me' was later released on *Here & There* (Prestige 7382), which also includes the missing track from the *Outward Bound* session, as well as two unreleased tracks from the *Five Spot* recordings.

Vol 1 & Vol 2 are available as a twofer entitled *Eric Dolphy: The Copenhagen Concert* (Prestige PR24077), and selections are also available on the album *Status Seeking* (Prestige PR24070).

ERIC DOLPHY: STOCKHOLM SESSIONS (Enja 3055; Swedish broadcast station, 25/9/1961, 19/11/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,bcl,fl); Idrees Suleiman (trp); Knud Jørgensen, Rune Ørnerman (pno); Jimmy Woode (bs); Sture Kallin (dr).

§Les; §Sorino; Ann; God Bless the Child; Alone; Gee-wee; §Don't Blame Me.

§Omit Suleiman and replace Ørnerman with Jørgensen.

This record is especially interesting for the inclusion of two numbers written by Dolphy ('Les', 'Sorino') which are not known to exist elsewhere.

Dolphy returned to the States, where he played once more with John Coltrane at the Village Vanguard, New York. These dates surfaced as:

JOHN COLTRANE: COLTRANE LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD (Impulse AS10; NY City, 2,5/11/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,bcl); John Coltrane (ts,ss); McCoy Tyner (pno); Reggie Workman, Jimmy Garrison (bs); Elvin Jones (dr).

Spiritual; §Softly as in a Morning Sunrise; §Chasin' the Trane.

§Dolphy does not appear on these selections.

Two other tracks were released from these dates later on the Coltrane album *Impressions* (Impulse AS42); one track, 'India', features Dolphy, but the other (the title track) does not. However, later it transpired that all the material featuring Dolphy had been recorded by Impulse, but lay buried in their vaults. It was exhumed, and released in 1977 as:

JOHN COLTRANE: THE OTHER VILLAGE VANGUARD TAPES (Impulse AS9325; NY City, 2,3,4,5/11/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,bcl); John Coltrane (ts,ss); McCoy Tyner (pno); Reggie Workman, Jimmy Garrison (bs); Elvin Jones (dr); Garvin Bushell (bass, contrabass); Ahmed Abdul-Malik (oud).

Chasin' the Trane; Spiritual; Unlimited Original; India; §Greensleeves; Spiritual.

§Dolphy does not appear on this track.

All the titles listed are alternative takes from those listed in the previous entry. This is a double album full of intense and exciting music. It should be played VERY LOUD!

Since then, the remaining unreleased takes from these nights have been made available on *The Mastery of John Coltrane: Vol 4 - Trane's Modes* (Impulse J29361/2). Both *Live At The Village Vanguard* and *Impressions* have been re-released by MCA on Jasmine JAS 9 and JAS 39, respectively.

Later that month, Dolphy returned

to Europe again, with the John Coltrane Quintet. The group made many radio and television broadcasts and private recordings, during their November/December European tour; in Sweden, Denmark, Germany and France. Typically, although they played in Britain, no known recordings, official or otherwise, appear to exist from that time.

The only recording to become commercially available from this tour is for:

JOHN COLTRANE: COLTRANOLOGY, VOL 1 (Affinity AFF14; Koncerthuset, Stockholm, 23/11/1961).

Eric Dolphy (as,fl,bcl); John Coltrane (ts,ss); McCoy Tyner (pno); Reggie Workman (bs); Elvin Jones (dr). My Favorite Things; Blue Train; Naima; Impressions.

Alternative takes exist of 'My Favorite Things' and 'Impressions', and these are available on *Coltrane Quintet & Quartet vs Europe* (Jazz Connoisseur JC112). The quartet tracks do not include Dolphy and are from a concert recorded some years later. Also available is part of an unidentified US broadcast of the Coltrane Dolphy group in the autumn/winter of 1961 featuring 'Miles' Mode' and 'Mr PC'; available on 3 Dolphy Groups (Unique Jazz UJ26).

This recording was originally available only on limited-edition bootlegs, bearing such labels as Beppo, Historic Performances, and Ozone.

Vol 2 in this series is from a later period, and does not include Dolphy

When the quintet returned to the US at the beginning of 1962, they made a TV broadcast. A radio broadcast caught the group in action at Birdland in February. This first appeared on a bootleg, which is still available:

JOHN COLTRANE: JOHN COLTRANE/ERIC DOLPHY (Ozone JLP10; Birdland, NY City, 10/2/1962).

Eric Dolphy (as,fl); John Coltrane (ts,ss); McCoy Tyner (pno); Jimmy Garrison (bs); Elvin Jones (dr).

My Favorite Things; Mr PC; Miles' Mode.

This album can now also be commercially obtained as *Two Giants Together* (French Musidisc 30JAS184), on which 'Mr PC' appears under the title 'Improvisation'. There was another track recorded at this session which appears on some versions of this album, sometimes omitted, but, in fact, a rendition of 'Body & Soul'.

Dolphy didn't work too much in 1962, and made no recordings of his own. From February until October, he only participated in a few sessions; one each for Pony Poindexter, Benny Golson and John Lewis. There was also an 'Ed Summerlin Jazz Vespers Service' in Washington DC, which was recorded for a TV broadcast.

On 12th October, he appeared in the orchestra of Charles Mingus, for the latter's infamous 'Towns Hall Concert' in New York, in which Mingus attempted to show the public his modus operandi in a concert situation. The event was an unqualified disaster - the group was too large and unwieldy, especially with no preliminary rehearsals. Parts of this chaotic performance were released on United Artists UA14024/UA15624. Dolphy is given some small solo space, but is mostly drowned out by bad mixing or the loudness of the ensemble. Not recommended.

There now appears an important recording, since it is – at this time – the only example of Dolphy's own work during this period to have emerged:

ERIC DOLPHY: QUINTET USA (Unique Jazz UJ10; NY City, circa late 1962–early 1963).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Eddie Armstrong (tp); Herbie Hancock (p); Richard Davis (bs); Edgar Bateman (dr).

Miss Ann; Left Alone; GW; 245. This was the line-up of Dolphy's own group at this time, and the group actually played a concert at NY Town Hall. This recording appears to be from a radio broadcast, as one can hear announcements before and after some tracks. This album is available on Italian import, and is recommended, as it fills a large gap in Dolphy's meagre recorded legacy. The recording quality is, of course, somewhat below standard. There is another track available from this date: 'I Got Rhythm' with the same personnel plus Joe Carroll on vocals; on 3 Dolphy Groups (Unique Jazz UJ26).

Recently released is *Eric Dolphy Live at the Gaiety Inn* (Ingo 14). This appears to be the same session as the latter, and pinning the date down to 7/10/1962. Personnel track listings are identical, except that there is an alternative track featuring Joe Carroll on vocal. 'Oh Lady Be Good'. Recording quality is better, so the Ingo is preferred.

In February and March 1963, Dolphy recorded with the Orchestra USA and Freddie Hubbard, respectively.

At the tail end of April, there was a Teddy Charles session, and a further Hubbard session on 2/5/1963. Dolphy solo on two of the Orchestra USA selections, but they are brief, and he seems a little uncomfortable. These are, however, the only commercially released examples of Dolphy's work with this organisation, on the album *Debut* (Colpix CLP/SCP448). Dolphy solo on none of the Teddy Charles tracks. The Freddie Hubbard sessions were collectively made available as *The Body & The Soul* (Impulse AS38). The only track on which Dolphy solos, 'Clarence's Place', features him in violently expressive form against what is basically a jazz messengers' backing, sounding odd but interesting.

Then at the end of May came: **ERIC DOLPHY: CONVERSATIONS** (FM308; NY City, circa late May–early June, 1963).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Clifford Jordan (ss); Woody Shaw Jr (tp); William 'Prince' Lasha (fl); Huey 'Sonny' Simmons (as); Bobby Hutcherson (vib); Richard Davis, Eddie Khan (bs); JC Moses, Charles Moffett (dr).

Jitterbug Waltz; Music Mazador; Alone Together; Love Me.

ERIC DOLPHY: IRON MAN (Douglas International SD785; NY City, circa late May–early June, 1963).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Clifford Jordan (ss); Prince Lasha (fl); Sonny Simmons (as); Woody Shaw Jr (tp); Bobby Hutcherson (vib); Richard Davis, Eddie Khan (bs); JC Moses (dr).

Iron Man; Mandrake; Come Sunday; Burning Spear; Ode to CP.

The track 'Love Me' is an unaccompanied alto sax solo and showcases

Dolphy's progression from the days of 'Tenderly'. It is a masterpiece of the highest order. The album *Conversations* has been reissued under the title *Memorial or The Eric Dolphy Memorial Album* on numerous labels, either wholly or in part. Two versions available at present are: *Music Mazador* (Affinity AFF47) and *Memorial Album* (Eptaph E4010). It has also been released on the Linelight and Everest labels, and seems to be reissued on a new label at least once a year.

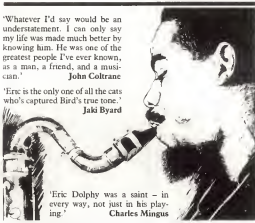
Iron Man was never released at the time of recording, supposedly for containing '... performances that were considered too futuristic to put out at that time ...'. It has never been widely available; apart from the original, only two versions have been conclusively tracked down: Japanese Epic ECPM91 and French Douglas 500003. Make the effort to obtain these two gems, especially the latter. The sessions which constitute these fine albums were recorded over five consecutive evenings. Further unused titles are believed to exist.

'Whatever I'd say would be an understatement. I can only say my life was made much better by knowing him. He was one of the greatest people I've ever known, as a man, a friend, and a musician.'

John Coltrane

'Eric is the only one of all the cats who's captured Bird's true tone.'

Jaki Byard



'Eric Dolphy was a saint – in every way, not just in his playing'

Charles Mingus

By September, Dolphy had rejoined Charles Mingus, and recorded with him on the 20th. The four tracks on which he played became part of the album *Mingus, Mingus, Mingus, Mingus* (Impulse AS54). (Now re-released by MCA on Jasmine JAS 36.) Although Dolphy only solos on one track, 'Hora Decubitus', this album is particularly worth investigating, not only because of Dolphy's wild, unorthodox outing (sandwiched as it is between the more conventional playing of Booker Ervin and Richard Williams), but also because it is one of Mingus' most superior recorded achievements.

There was also a Gil Evans session that month, but Dolphy only appears on two tracks, restricted to the horn section. On New Year's Eve, he appeared once more with the John Coltrane group, on a ball with Cecil Taylor and Art Blakey, at the Lincoln Center in New York, of which a private recording apparently exists.

January 1964 saw a recording of the Sextet of Orchestra USA, which was released as *March the Knife* (now available on French RCA FLA2413), and features solos by Dolphy on two tracks. On 8th February, Dolphy appeared in one of Leonard Bernstein's New York Philharmonic Young

People's Concerts, which resulted in a TV broadcast. Films and videotapes are available commercially, and feature a short solo by Dolphy, unfortunately marred by Bernstein's narration.

Later that month saw the recording of what is arguably Dolphy's finest recorded achievement:

ERIC DOLPHY QUINTET: OUT TO LUNCH (Blue Note BST84163; Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 25/2/1964).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Freddie Hubbard (tp); Bobby Hutcherson (vib); Richard Davis (bs); Anthony Williams (dr).

Hat & Beard; Something Sweet, Something Tender; Gaze/Down; Out to Lunch; Straight Up & Down.

Definitely a must, showing Dolphy's working group to full advantage, and featuring the leader's advanced and abstract soloing, as well as some – at times – almost telepathic interplay between the musicians. It is also the only album where all the material is penned by Dolphy, and is uniformly of a high standard. Some critics have latterly tended to denigrate the lasting value of this record. Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing?

Dannie Richmond (dr).

So Long Eric; Meditations.

The track 'Meditations' is issued as 'Praying With Eric' on all versions of this album. Other titles were recorded at this concert, one of which was 'Orange was the Color of Her Dress, then Blue Silk'; the other titles are not known.

All sleeves of this album erroneously cite the location as the Tyrone Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The actual location is as given above: not misled.

This album is also available as Jazz Workshop JW59 or Fantasy JW59. It has also been released in Europe on French Fantasy 6140.

All through April, the group appeared in European cities, and practically all their appearances have been captured for radio or TV broadcast, or on private recordings. Of the commercially released material, there are the following – all vital performances: **CHARLES MINGUS: ORCHESTRA WITH ERIC DOLPHY: VOL 1 'HOPE SO ERIC'** (Ingo 10); **VOL 2 'FABLES OF FAUBUS'** (Ingo 13); **VOL 3 'PARKERIANA'** (Ingo 15); (Bremen, Germany, 16/4/1964).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Johnny Coles (tp); Clifford Jordan (ss); Jaki Byard (pno); Charles Mingus (bs); Dannie Richmond (dr).

Hope So Eric; ATFWUSA; Sophisticated Lady; Fables of Faubus; Owl; Meditations.

CHARLES MINGUS: THE GREAT CONCERT OF CHARLES MINGUS (America F 30AM003,4,5; Salle Wagram, Paris, 17/4/1964); Theatre des Champs Elysees, Paris, 18/4/1964.

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Clifford Jordan (ss); Johnny Coles (tp); Jaki Byard (pno); Charles Mingus (bs); Dannie Richmond (dr).

So Long Eric; Orange was the Color of Her Dress; Then Blue Silk; Parkeriana; Meditations on Integration; Fables of Faubus; Sophisticated Lady.

Johnny Coles appears on this track only, which is also the only track recorded at the Salle Wagram to be included in this album. He collapsed with a perforated gastric ulcer before the start of the second number, and was hospitalised for the remainder of the tour. This track is also erroneously titled 'Goodbye Park Pie Hat' on all versions of this album.

Also available as Presque PR34001.

CHARLES MINGUS: MINGUS IN EUROPE VOL 1 (Enja 3049); **VOL 2** (Enja 3077); (Wuppertal, Germany, 26/4/1964).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Clifford Jordan (ss); Jaki Byard (pno); Charles Mingus (bs); Dannie Richmond (dr).

Fables of Faubus; Starting; Orange was the Color of Her Dress; Sophisticated Lady; ATFWYOU (USA); Charleston.

CHARLES MINGUS: MINGUS IN STUTTGART (Unique Jazz UJ007,8,9; Mozaartsal, Stuttgart, 28/4/1964).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bcl); Clifford Jordan (ss); Jaki Byard (pno); Charles Mingus (bs); Dannie Richmond (dr).

So Long Eric; Orange was the Color of Her Dress; Then Blue Silk; These Foolish Things; Peggy's Blue Skylight; Meditations; ATFW USA; Sophisticated Lady; Fables of Faubus.

This album has been released as one double (UJ007+8), and one single (UJ009) album. It is taken from a radio broadcast, and there is a significant loss in sound quality. Nevertheless, it is an important document, showing the further development of this group in action, particularly as Mingus nudged the group's arrangements so skilfully upon Cole's sudden illness, that it is often impossible to detect that they were written for three horns, not two. Dolphy and Jordan more than compensate for the loss of the trumpeter.

Also available is *Mingus Sextet in Europe* (Unique Jazz UJ23), the time and place of which is not known. Johnny Cole's appearance suggests it must be part of a concert early in the tour – probably a broadcast in Norway, Sweden or Denmark. On these, Dolphy does not appear on any versions of AFWUSA' and 'Sophisticated Lady'.

Apart from the *Mingus* in Stuttgart, plus the Dolphy/Hancock and Dolphy/Schiffrin recordings (the latter two for curiosity and rarity value), the Jazz Commensal and Unique Jazz recordings are not especially recommended; most of the material is available in better forms. They are mostly for the hard-core fanatic. The Enja and Inigo recordings, however, are unhesitatingly recommended – the former in particular for superior radio and television broadcast sound-quality.

When the Mingus group returned to the States at the end of April, Dolphy remained in Europe. Before he left for Europe at the beginning of April, he was quoted as saying: 'I'm on my way to Europe to live for a while. Why? Because I can get more work there playing my own music, and because if you try to do anything different in this country, people put you down for it.'

He had intended to settle in Paris,

and a radio broadcast made there exists, with Dolphy, Kenny Drew, Guy Pederson and Daniel Humair, recorded circa May-June 1964.

On 2nd June, he was in Hilversum, Holland, for a radio show, eventually made available as:

ERIC DOLPHY: LAST DATE (Limelight LS86013; Hilversum, Netherlands 2/6/1964).

Eric Dolphy (as, fl, bc); Missa Mengelberg (pno); Jacques Schols (bs); Han Bennink (dr).

Epitaphy; South Street Exit; The Madrigal Speaks; The Panther Walks; Hypochortismatrefuzz; You Don't Know What Love Is; Miss Ann.

This album was recorded live in the studio. There is a short passage dubbed on to the end of the last track from an interview made with Dolphy during the session, giving it all an eerie finality.

This album has been made available in numerous forms, some of which are: Trip TLP5506, Mercury 6433 550 and Fontana TL5248.

An alternative take of 'Epitaphy' recorded at this session has subsequently been released by Han Bennink on his own label ICP. The album is *Grey Red Tailed Parrot* (ICP015).

Although the above album was the last Dolphy session to become commercially available, it was not, in fact, his 'last date'. When he returned to Paris, he recorded another radio broadcast, this time with Donald Byrd. In late June, he recorded one more before arriving in Berlin on the 27th.

Eric Dolphy died in Berlin, Germany, on Friday, 29th June, 1964, from uraemia compounded by diabetes, which resulted in a fatal heart-attack. ■



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ON THE



In this first of a regular opinion column, *The Wire* throws open its pages to those with something to say about the current state of the music.

Our guest contributors might be musicians, promoters, activists, commentators etc. . . but they'll have one thing in common – a strong, personal view for which they've possibly had no previous publishing outlet.

All the views expressed in this column are, of course, personal to the individual contributor and we'll be pleased to hear your comments – either for or against. In this way, we hope to establish a useful dialogue about some of the music's burning issues.

To introduce our first opinion, we've invited a musician to air a few of his thoughts – drummer KEN HYDER of Talisker and a founder-member/executive of AIM (Association of Improvising Musicians).
Over to you, Ken . . .

READERS of this magazine should know what it's like to have a minority taste, to have discovered something valuable in music, a force which compels the listener to share that experience with another.

The more you tap the source, the more simple and direct the experience becomes, and after a while you wonder why other people often find your own taste in music so difficult.

It's ironic that the music covered in these pages is a music with a message against intolerance – often racial intolerance – yet it attracts itself hostility, intolerance, misunderstanding and confusion.

Missing the point

You'd think that in such a be-

leagured position, this music and its adherents would be drawn together in an enveloping mutual understanding and unity. But the problem is that so many of us appear to miss the point of the music altogether and become engaged in energy-sapping squabbles on the periphery of the music. The attitudes towards the music in this country are sick.

We treat the music like a competition. We have polls which state that such-and-such a tenor player is better than this other tenor player. We have arguments about the relative merits of whole categories within the music. Some people appear to believe that anything after Parker is valueless. Others reverse the position. Others still shift the line chronologically . . . maybe stopping at 'Trane, or Aylar.

Curious collection mania

There's also a curious British trait of collection mania which affects the followers of the music turning them into musical trawlers. I have come to terms with the idea of listeners who profess a love for the music who divert themselves with arguments about who was second trumpet in an obscure Savoy session 40 years ago.

Mystery of the music

I think it's probably more popular here to try and explain or understand the mystery of the music by appraising and appreciating technical aspects. Musicians are singled out for technical dexterity and speed, and people become fixated on that technique, where really it's only a means to an end. And technique is only a part of it.

There's also an unhealthy snobbery associated with the music which allows those who are hip to it to look down on and denigrate other musics.

Crossing the gulf

And it's perhaps here that there is the biggest gulf between listeners and players. Many listeners are actually quite surprised when they sit down and talk to some players at the sharp end of the music. They assume that these musicians are somehow channelled into a narrow view of music which is solely centred on the avant-garde.

WIRE

The followers can often be the narrow-minded while the players' listening habits can encompass the whole range of jazz right back to Bechet, European classical music, ethnic and classical musics from other parts of the world, and people like James Brown, Stevie Wonder and Jimi Hendrix.

Media misunderstanding

Music journalism in this country has a lot to answer in this regard. All too often interviews with players – something that anyway is dwindling all the time – focus on amusing anecdotes which we all love to read about, but which do not often lead to a deeper understanding of either the musician or the music. And music journals have consistently ignored the social and political context of the way the music is made. It would be interesting to see how many of the British musicians featured on these pages earn the average industrial earnings ... how many have a home of their own and circumstances which allow them to bring up a family ... how they are treated by their union ... how they are treated and paid by promoters ... how they fare compared to other musicians in their dealings with the Arts Council of Great Britain and institutions like the British Council ... what they themselves think about what their music is ... how it's formed ... what the musical priorities are in creating it ... how it's treated in the musical press, the press in general and on radio and television.

In the cosy, groovy, hip pages of British musical publications questions like these – and there are dozens more – have got lost in the froth of the easy way out.

I'm not making out a case for a sob story, because we don't play sob music, and the situation isn't hopeless and it's not static.

The fight to survive

I sense a change in the music and among the musicians I know. There was a time a few years ago when the backbiting among players, or some groups of players, was heavy. There now seems to be a warmth and companionship developing among players who are coming together to try and do something about the

situation in which the music is fighting to survive.

And as the bitchiness subsides, the music changes, too. Players seem to be finding it easier to play together, and play together selflessly to create music which is stronger than any single individual's contribution.

Breaking the stereotypes

Musicians perhaps known for their association with one corner of the music are breaking out of their stereotypes and finding that the political and social co-operation now developing among players works on the bandstand, too.

My feeling is that the music is maturing and is being consolidated, and that we're going to witness a fresh breeze sweeping through the scene. New gurus and new breakthroughs in style don't impress me as highly as they once did, for the truth is that no one music, nor any particular period in history, has a monopoly on the spirit.

There are different functions in music, and what you look for in one kind of music for dancing to, you don't necessarily look for in another music.

Channelling the spirit

But in the music which this magazine concentrates on, it's the spirit which attracts me the most, and the direct emotional communication from one human being to another. I can't say what that spirit is, and those who have allowed the spirit to flow through their playing describe it in different ways. It can be channelled into religious experience, and certainly it can be channelled through art.

In the end it can't be analysed or explained, it's just there. And neither can you seek it in your own playing because the harder you try, the further away it gets. Someone said to me recently that it's more a matter of allowing the spirit to come through, rather than turning it on.

If attitudes here were to change away from the negative aspects of activity like intolerant antagonism, irrelevant fixations with the paraphernalia of the music, and waste-of-time interfection squabbles, maybe the music would have more room to breathe. ■

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JELLY ROLL MORTON was the first jazz intellectual. That is to say he was the first to develop theories as to what jazz is, how it works, and who was able to explain his ideas lucidly, systematically, as in his famous 1938 Library of Congress recordings. Unsurprisingly, there have been few similar cases. Its abiding show-business affiliations still encourage many followers of this music to cherish an image of the jazzman as one who sticks his horn into his mouth and blandly emotes. In such an ambience, to have ideas and be articulate about them is to invite hostility. Yet Morton has had a few successors.

George Russell was born in Cincinnati, in 1923, the year, as it happens, that Morton cut his first significant body of recordings. And he had an appropriate background for one who was to produce what John Lewis would call 'the first contribution made by jazz to the theory of music,' his father being Professor of Music at Oberlin University. But jazz got to him in his early teens, an important influence being Jimmy Mundy, a neighbour, who was then arranging for Benny Goodman. By the age of 15, Russell was playing the drums at a local night-club, and at Wilberforce University joined a band named the Collegians.

Launched as a writer

At 20, he joined Benny Carter, to work as a drummer. But Russell had learnt something about arranging from a fellow patient at a TB sanatorium, and one day, at a downtown theatre in Chicago, the band tried over one of his pieces. Subsequently he recalled, 'Benny was very happy with it, and on top of that he paid me for it. . . I was launched on a writing career'. Next, he did some arranging for Earl Hines, who was at the El Grotto club in Chicago. And then came Dizzy Gillespie's 1946 recording of 'Round About Midnight'. This latter had a great effect on him, and he knew he had to be at the centre of things, in New York.

Gillespie was putting a large band together, his second, and several arrangers were offering him material. Not feeling particularly confident, Russell brought out his Carter piece, and the trumpeter liked it as much as the alto saxophonist had. However, illness was again ready to play a crucial role in his life, the very next day putting him into hospital for 16 months. Later he said, 'I knew I had to make use of this time to educate myself. From the scraps of advanced harmony I'd learnt, I knew that my answer didn't lie in traditional theory. I'd experimented a bit with polytonality, but on the piano in the hospital library I began a really intensive research into tonality'. That continued for 11 months, and towards the end of this time the Lydian mode (characterised by a sharpened fourth, and found in folk music in several parts of the world) began to emerge as a key factor.

On leaving hospital, Russell accepted an invitation to recuperate at Max Roach's Brooklyn apartment, where Gillespie, Lewis, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis were frequent guests. There, 'Thanks to Max's piano and Mrs Roach's monumental patience, I continued to research for another nine months,' he remembered⁽¹⁾. Then he needed to find out if he could utilise his discoveries in composition. The result was that he conducted Gillespie's band in 'Cubana Be/Cubana Bop' at Carnegie Hall in December 1947. In the same month, a record was made and the jazz community at large became aware of George Russell, though not immediately.

Independent of convention

Published comment centred on the leader's trumpeting, even although this was set in an unprecedented context, and upon Chano Pozo's chanting and superb conga drumming. But the exultant, harshly incantatory ensemble passages, like those of 'Thermopylae', Robert Graettinger's first score for Stan Kenton, recorded that same month, December 1947, for a while defied attempts at a coherent response. Russell's two movements are strikingly different from each other yet obviously related closely, their approach to the jazz orchestra's resources being disconcertingly independent of convention. This is most evident in the music's discontinuity, its juxtaposition of very different textures and types of motion, in its violently unpredictable rhythmic life. It is consistent but accords with laws then unfamiliar, and only years later did we grasp that 'Cubana Be/Cubana Bop' was the most original piece ever recorded by a Gillespie big band.

Meanwhile, Russell had been noticed by other perceptive leaders and wrote arrangements for Claude Thornhill, Artie Shaw, and an interesting version of 'Caravan' that was recorded by Charlie Ventura. His next 'major' score acquired, however, a legendary reputation all of its own. 'The Bird in Igor's Yard' was long available only in the form of two acetates, one owned by Gerry Mulligan, the other by the New York disc-jockey Symphony Sid, who broadcast it frequently on his late-night radio programme. Recorded by Buddy De Franco's large band in 1949, it was only issued commercially much later and shows that in the 18 months since 'Cubana Be/Cubana Bop', Russell had moved to a considerably more precise use of his discoveries. Essentially an advance on Eddie Sauter's intelligent vehicles for Goodman such as 'Clarinet à la King', with the leader's instrument deeply embedded in the ensemble and room for tenor and piano solos by Al Cohn and Gene di Novi, 'The Bird in Igor's Yard' benefits from better performance and recording than the Gillespie piece. The problem for listeners is this music's diversity of gesture, for it presents a sequence of new yet unmistakably connected ideas, often more than one at a time. So tightly packed are these that the piece leaves an impression of size out of proportion to its brief length. The complexities, though, are of a strictly musical order, encouraging the musicians to play with fire and spontaneity.

That 'The Bird in Igor's Yard' signalled a process of refinement and further exploration on Russell's part was confirmed by his next two memorable recordings, 'Odjenar', named after his wife at that time, Anita Odjenar, and 'Ezz-thetic', dedicated to the boxer Ezzard Charles. These sextet outings date from 1951, and show Russell's music briefly intersecting that of Lennie Tristano. This was not due to the presence of Billy Bauer's guitar and Lee Konitz's alto saxophone, but, rather, because of its uncompromising linearity, in which the recalcitrant harmonies are largely dissolved.

Logical ordering of events

In contrast, though, with the untrammelled impulses which shape Tristano's freely improvised 'Intuition' and 'Digression' of 1949, Russell imposes what seems like a logical ordering of events, the tightly patterned short and long phrases of 'Odjenar' switching restlessly between the guitar, alto and Davis's trumpet. There is unpredictable counterpoint between the two horns on 'Ezz-thetic', and

GEORGE RUSSELL-RATIONAL ANTHEMS

Phase 1 - Early works, the emergence of the Lydian theory, the Workshop and associated recordings discussed by Max Harrison.

the ascetic tendency behind the leaping, angular lines of 'The Bird in Igor's Yard' is here stronger. Konitz is adept on both items, Roach's drumming is tirelessly inventive on 'Ezz-thetic', but these pieces are less well performed and recorded than the de Franco score. Nothing could conceal, however, that 'Ezz-thetic' was an extremely original variant on the usual sort of bop up-tempo number (based, somewhat remotely, on the chords of 'Love For Sale'), and it is regrettable that the version Russell made for Parker's string ensemble was not the sort of thing Norman Granz, who had the great man under contract, was interested in recording.

After this, Russell dropped out of circulation for about five years. He devoted the period 1950-53 to a gradual formalisation of his ideas and the production of a thesis which eventually was published⁽²⁾. Practically no composing was done during this time, and he later said 'the theory had become an organic part of my life. It was a live, growing thing with a constantly expanding logical life of its own. . . a concept with a soul, born out of jazz and its needs, yet embracing all music created in the equal temperament system'⁽³⁾.

What he had done was to examine the entire harmonic resources of Western music, finding and systematising an entirely fresh set of relationships that had always been present in the transitional framework and which, so to speak, only awaited discovery. There is, unfortunately, no space here to explain Russell's ideas, and it can only be said that his concept is based on the grading of intervals by the distance of their pitches from a central note. That may not sound much, yet it makes available resources whose full possibilities, as John Benson Brooks has written, 'may take as much as a century to work out' (3). And according to Art Farmer, who was to have an important role in some of Russell's forthcoming records, the Lydian Chromatic Concept 'opens the doors to countless means of melodic expression. It also dispels many of the don'ts and can'ts that, to various degrees, have been imposed on the improviser through the study of traditional harmony'⁽⁴⁾.

New refinement of technique

During 1953-55, Russell composed experimentally within this now well-defined set of relationships, but 'each insoluble new problem caused the Concept to erupt,' and 'following each eruption there came a new refinement of technique, a more secure grasp of more materials'⁽⁵⁾. Clearly the time was ap-

nearly Bartókian sensitivity and invention. Noticeable, also, are the ostinatos, overlapping unevenly in a decidedly Stravinskian manner, on 'Ye Hypocrite, Ye Beelzebub'. Likewise, when Russell has a soloist provide in one key while the band is in another (for example, Farmer in A minor against a B flat minor background on 'Knights of the Steamtable'), it recalls Bartók's practice of accompanying a melody only with pitches which are not used in the melody itself. His awareness of the Schoenbergian technique of continuous variation (anticipated, in jazz, by Duke Ellington's 'Old King Dozi' of 1938, but never followed up) is hinted at in several of these pieces, too.

Expressing several moods

Another of Russell's preoccupations at this time was that of expressing several moods in the same piece, instances being 'Jack's Blues' and the alfreco 'Ballad of Hix Blewitt'. His best examples, however, are 'Lydian Lullaby' and 'The Day John Brown Was Hanged', both recorded under McKusick's name. The former opens with the kind of restlessness also created by the agitated geometry of 'Livingstone, I Presume?' and resolves to an overtly romantic mood whose continuing uneasiness is conveyed by a volatile mixture of tense and languorous phrases. Slowly this assumes a more dancelike character, but the disquiet, which had never been far away, cannot be held off, and returns.

In 'The Day John Brown Was Hanged', the most substantial piece from this phase of Russell's development, the same emotional and formal scheme is written larger and more elaborately. Again the opening presents jagged, highly rhythmic non-imitative counterpoint with strongly differentiated figures set against each other and across the beat. This is suddenly broken into by Galbraith's statement of 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic' ('John Brown's body . . .'), which, over desolate, eerily sustained notes from McKusick, sounds unreal, bizarre. The melody's diatonic squareness throws into relief the emotional and technical complexity of its surroundings. Beginning as a dance, the central section brings a return of strongly rhythmic activity, but the texture is now discontinuous, its range of gesture too diverse to charge the atmosphere with the nascent gaiety, and, in one of the most masterly passages Russell has ever devised, it transforms itself into an oddly disembodied, intensely sad blues. This leads to a shorter quotation from 'The Battle Hymn' that imperceptibly shifts back into the opening restlessness, which had never really been held at bay.

We might have expected music of such high quality and independent character to be ignored, but it did lead to one commission. From 'The End of a Love Affair' and 'You're My Thrill' on McKusick's *Cross Section Saxes* LP, Russell distills further intensely rhythmic and contrapuntal scores, but his most imaginative use of borrowed material has remained 'All About Rosie'. This was written, along with pieces by Jimmy Giuffrè, Charles Mingus, Gunther Schuller, Milton Babbitt and Harold Shapero, for Brandeis University's fourth Festival of the Creative Arts in 1957, and is based, he said in the programme notes, 'on a motive taken from an Alabama Negro children's song-game entitled "Rosie, Little Rosie"'. Once again we find a quasi-Stravinskian superimposition of phrases of unequal length, tension arising

from conflict between the regularity of the underlying beat, which shifts between 2/2 and 3/2, and the irregular way the accents of these phrases fall around it. In this first movement a cogent musical argument is developed through repetition and sequence which rises to a logical, abrupt, climactic end.

Instantly recognisable style

A similar process can be heard, slowed down, in the central movement. This may be considered an investigation of how to retain the feeling of the blues without the form, and passes meaningfully through several tonal areas with unobtrusive but always telling changes of instrumental colour. In fact this is an entirely convincing instance of fully written-out jazz polyphony, best studied in conjunction with 'You're My Thrill' and 'The End of a Love Affair'. The very rapid finale includes a brilliant solo by Evans – the recorded performance with which he first attracted wide attention – followed by excellent ones from John LaPorta, Farmer, Teddy Charles and McKusick. This powerfully swinging conclusion receives precisely the virtuoso performance it deserves. The movements are well differentiated but the basic shape of the main 'Rosie, Little Rosie' phrase can be glimpsed in all three, adding to the unity imparted through Russell's by now instantly recognisable style of writing.

The stinging impact and seeming inevitability of such pieces tempt one to suggest that he succeeded here in bringing a greater degree of rationality to the writing and improvising of jazz. Certainly the solos of Farmer, McKusick, Evans and the centrally important if unobtrusive ensemble work of Galbraith relate with unusual closeness to Russell's stringent and diversified themes. He has said 'a jazz writer is an improviser, too'¹⁴ and that the best jazz compositions 'might even sound more intuitive than a purely improvised solo'¹⁵.

This is relevant to the thematic origin of 'All About Rosie', for Russell's music has as strong a sense of the past as of the present and future. A piece such as 'Lydian M-1', recorded by Charles in 1956, still sounds more modern than much work done ten or even 20 years later, yet the crisis-crossing of its furiously mobile ensemble lines echoes the collective improvisations of much earlier jazz. Embodying the oldest and newest tendencies of this music, Russell's finest pieces sound timeless. That would have been a satisfying enough achievement for most people, but he needed to go on, and in two ways. Firstly, having, with Tristano, Mingus and a few others, anticipated the freedoms of the new jazz of the 1960s from Ornette Coleman onwards, he wanted to explore their scope in relation to his own methods, and that meant, secondly, forming a regular band of his own. This became the Sextet, about whose imposing sequence of seven LPs the jazz community has for some 20 years maintained an almost unanimous silence. That silence will be broken in the next article in this series. □

proaching for him to test his ideas publicly, and this re-emergence was signalled by the inclusion of his 'Lydian M-1' on Teddy Charles's *Tenet* LP of January 1956. That was only a pretence, however, to the substantial body of music which Russell now set down.

There were three recording sessions in the following March, October and December, the results being issued as by George Russell's Smalltet in RCA's Jazz Workshop series. The personnel, which was subject to few variations, was built on that of a quartet with which Hal McKusick (alto), Barry Galbraith (guitar) and Milt Hinton (bass) sometimes worked, and was completed by Farmer (trumpet), Bill Evans (piano) and Joe Harris (drums). A contemporaneous LP in the Workshop series led by McKusick and employing a related personnel contains three substantial pieces by Russell. These, together with the dozen items on the composer's own record and three more on McKusick's 1958 LP, *Cross Section Saxes*, represent a complete justification of Russell's long years of labour.

Most obviously, they demonstrate the variety of his thematic ideas and of his treatments of them in music that teems with invention yet is altogether consistent stylistically, that has an immediately recognisable character but which is very subtle. Thus although both 'Jack's Blues' and 'Night Sound' might be called jazz nocturnes, they are quite different. The latter, with its shifting tonal centres, has contrapuntal lines that are distinct but constantly overlap, while the theme section of 'Jack's Blues', although having a definite pulse, conveys an impression of a mobile, nervously undecided tempo. These are intricate and masterly scores with a subdued intensity that is peculiarly Russell's. In contrast, 'Miss Clara', from McKusick's Workshop LP, has angular, cranky thematic phrases whose wilfully abrupt movements are tellingly underlined by thick scoring. Perhaps the most vivid passage is the unaccompanied contrapuntal opening by Farmer's trumpet and Jimmy Cleveland's trombone, though in all these pieces Russell's searching originality informs every detail.

It is no paradox, however, that he appears in these compositions as the most sophisticated of jazzmen, more aware than others, perhaps because of his period of study with Stefan Wolpe, of the larger world of music. On a piece such as 'Fellow Delegates', in which Russell himself takes part, using a set of chromatically tuned drums of California redwood, percussion is employed with a

- (1) Dom Cerulli: 'George Russell' in *Down Beat*, 29th May, 1958.
- (2) George Russell: *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization* (New York, 1959).
- (3) John Benson Brooks: 'George Russell' in *The Jazz Review*, February 1960.
- (4) From Russell's sleeve-note for the original American issue of his *Jazz Workshop LP*, unfortunately not retained for subsequent reissues.
- (5) George Russell: 'Where Do We Go from Here?' in *The Jazz Word* edited by Dom Cerulli, Burt Korall and Mort Natanz (New York, 1960).

SOUND CHECK

Record Reviews

PETER KING: *New Beginning* (Spotlite SPJ 520)

Recorded: London - 23rd June and 15th July, 1982.

Side One: 'Blues For S.J.', 'Fourth Emergence', 'Before The Dawn', 'Dolphin Dance'. *Side Two:* 'New Beginning', 'Dream Dancing', 'Three Blonde Mice', 'Gingerbread Boy', 'Confirmation'.

King (as); John Horler or Pat Smythe (p); Dick Pearce (tpt, flg), Dave Green or Ron Matthews (b), Spike Wells (d).

PAZ: *Paz Are Back* (SPJ 518)

Recorded: London - Summer 1980.

Side One: 'Laying Eggs', 'Horror', 'AC/DC', 'Where is Ron?'. *Side Two:* 'Moonchild', 'I Can't Remember', 'Iron Works', 'The Everywhere Calypso', 'Dancing In The Dark'.

Ray Warleigh (as, ss, flt, pan pipes), Geoff Castle (p, el b), Ron Matthews (b, el b), Ed Speight (g), Frank Gibson (d), Chris Fletcher, Simon Morton, Martin Drew (perc), Dick Crouch (leader).

TIM WHITEHEAD'S BORDERLINE: *English People: The Subterranean Life at Richmond Lock and Other Locations* (SPJ 523)

Recorded: Wokingham - October 1982.

Side One: 'Little Flower', 'Yellow Hill', 'Rip Rap', 'I Want To Talk About You'. *Side Two:* 'Diggin' The Patch', 'English People: The Subterranean Life at Richmond Lock and Other Locations', 'The Impossible Question'.

Whitehead (ts, ss), Django Bates (p, el p), Mick Hutton (b), David Trigwell or Nic France (d).

FINGERS: *Remember Mingus* (SPJ 521)

Recorded: Forum Theatre, Hatfield - 29th May, 1979.

Side One: 'Anthropology', 'Mood Indigo', 'Remember Mingus'. *Side Two:* 'Tears Inside', 'Alice's Wonderland'.

Dave Green (b), Lol Coxhill (ss, ts), Bruce Turner (as, cl), Michael Garrick (p), Alan Jackson (d).

SPIRIT LEVEL: *Mice In The Wallet* (SPJ 522)

Recorded: London - 20th and 21st July, 1982.

Side One: 'Fifty Years In A Factory', 'Bristol Blues', 'Too Late, Too Late', 'All Heaven In A Rage'. *Side Two:* 'Mice In The Wallet', 'Orinoco', 'Peggy's Blue Skylight'.

Dave Holdsworth (tpt, flg, pocket corn), Paul Dunmall (ts), Tim Richards (p), Paul Anstey (b), Tony Orrell (d).

ROBIN JONES QUARTET: *Eye Of The Hurricane* (SPJ 519)

Recorded: Bull's Head, London - Summer 1981.

Side One: 'Eye Of The Hurricane', 'Lush Life', 'Up Jumped Spring'. *Side Two:* 'Berimbau', 'Passion Dance'.

Roland Lacey (ts, flt), Esmond Selwyn (g), Alan Broadbent (el b), Robin Jones (d).

Everything must change, as that beautiful old song says. A few years ago it would have been astounding to find a newly minted batch of home-produced albums like these six glossy packaged Spotlites tucked in among the American imports at your friendly neighbourhood record store.

Now, thanks to the pop-music boom - and I suppose something good had to come out of it - it seems possible at last to record and distribute British jazz at a reasonable cost. Either that or Tony Williams has auctioned off the west wing of his country estate...

Whatever the reason, spare a thought for Peter King who has had to wait far longer than anyone else for this novel state of affairs. He has been topping the *Melody Maker* polls ever since 1960 - when jazz fans still used to read *Melody Maker* - and, as Williams points out, it is a disgrace that this is King's first album as leader.

Britain's most consistently rewarding altoist is probably incapable of making an indifferent record, but the title of this one *New Beginning*, is a misleading and unnecessary gimmick. For a quarter of a century, this painstaking craftsman has been refining the straight-ahead style inspired by Charlie Parker, with passing bows to Tubby Hayes and Phil Woods, and he is not about to take a flying leap into the unknown now.

The short title track, a spontaneous duet with the excellent John Horler, is open-ended in a tidy way but otherwise the session is firmly rooted in the spartan post-bop format from which King has never deviated as other

fashions have come and gone.

Two-fifths of Ronnie Scott's current group appear on some tracks, Dick Pearce supplying his thoughtfully elegant turn of phrase and Ron Matthews serving another reminder of the originality of his sound and ideas. But this is a King-size show and the leader's no-nonsense solos, articulated cleanly at any tempo and in any key, will be an education to any aspiring saxophone player.

The versatile Matthews crops up again on *Paz Are Back*, another rather hyped-up title for a band that has never really been away. Its progenitor, vibist-percussionist Dick Crouch, has never needed much soul-searching to keep up with the times, and was one of the first to recognise the potential of Latin-based jazz as a relaxing antidote to all the honking and shrieking that used to blight the local scene.

He doesn't play on this effort, but he co-produced it and the mixture is as determinedly contemporary as before. Latin or funk rhythms throb away behind lush layers of synthesised satin and suitably laid-back solos by Ray Warleigh and Geoff Castle, in which each phrase is followed by a pause of equal length to allow everything to sink into the most spaced-out brain.

Warleigh raises the temperature a bit on 'AC/DC', and there is also a cod, two-beat version of 'Dancing In The Dark' at the end that tells us more about the real personality of the musicians on the session than anything else; the jokes people choose to tell, and the way they tell them, are often more revealing than their more carefully weighed opinions.

There's something faintly overpowering about Tim Whitehead's first album for Spotlite, which features two of his water-colour landscapes on the jacket and the meaningful title of *English People: The Subterranean Life at Richmond Lock and Other Locations*. A book of Whitehead poems and paintings, we are also informed, will shortly be published under the same title.

The Ganges comes into it as much as the Thames, judging from the author's sleeve notes, which contain quotations from J Krishnamurti and The Gita, together with such arcane sub-titles for each piece as 'I am not the writer, you are not the reader, this is not an entertainment; we are people of the world travelling, learning together'.

Fortunately, the music makes it easy to recover from this multimedia maelstrom of selflessness. Whitehead's five originals all have an appealingly English mixture of naivety and sophistication, and there is one pleasant

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Keith Jarrett-flavoured piece by Django Bates, one of the best young pianists around. He and bassist Mick Hutton have an impressive amount of taste and restraint to go with their technique.

'Rip Rap' has an excellent solo by the leader, but elsewhere his buzzy tone, a little reminiscent of a younger Dick Morrissey, tends to sound strained. And as far as selflessness goes, there are jarring examples on 'Diggin' The Patch' and 'I Want To Talk About You' of the saxophonist determined to have the last word. Still all these musicians are sure to be around for a long time, and this album will provide an interesting example of their early work.

Fingers, Bassist Dave Green's tribute to Mingus, is a good idea that doesn't come off. Green is a genuine, likeable person and his choice of personnel here is more a reflection of the lasting friendships forged during his career than of any truly shared musical aim.

Lol Coxhill's rubbery phrasing and inbuilt sense of logic make him adaptable to almost any context, but Bruce Turner's hesitant, fragmented lines and insecure sense of time are no asset to the session, and the hornmen's occasional attempts to harmonise fail more often than they succeed.

Green and the ever-crisp Alan

Jackson were both working regularly with Humphrey Lyttelton when this album was recorded. As might be expected, they dovetail well but Michael Garrick, normally such a resourceful pianist, seems at a loss what to do much of the time.

There are no such problems with *Spirit Level*, a group with a very clear set of objectives. The last time I heard their tenorist Paul Dunmall he was freaking out as though to the manner born, but on *Mice In The Wall* the band's more disciplined approach forces everyone to organise their playing more tightly and the results are encouraging.

However, to cite this West Country group as natural successors to the generation of Surman, Osborne and Dean, as the sleeve notes ambitiously suggest, is heaping too much on their young shoulders for a lot of stylistic immaturity is evident.

Holdsworth is the most experienced player, with a lively tone and attack, but to my ears his flurries often contain an element of bluff. Dunmall's broad-toned playing has fewer uncomfortable moments, but his influences are in flux: on the title track his thinking runs along Wayne Shorterish lines, whereas on 'Peggy's Blue Skylight' strong traces of Johnny Griffin come surprisingly

tumbling out. The rhythm section grooves tightly throughout, proof that a band that stays together plays together.

The biggest disappointment of this batch is *Eye Of The Hurricane*, recorded before a live (but only just) audience at the Bull's Head in Barnes about a year ago. Guitarist Esmond Selwyn sets himself a difficult task by working without keyboard support, but all his technique cannot disguise uncomfortable deficiencies in finesse and timing.

His chord inversions are often extremely basic, and tenorist Lacey suffers some dire lapses during the course of their shapeless and overlong solos. Only Jones and Broadbent in the rhythm section emerge from this nervous session with any credit, and I have more recently heard the trio playing better than they do here, but how the musicians themselves allowed this recording to be released baffles me.

Jack Massarik

It was in 1969 that the famed improvising percussionist Jamie Muir first introduced me to the work of Steve Reich. The piece was called 'Come Out' and consisted of a short, spoken phrase recorded on 16 tracks and played back at many speeds and in many synchronisations to create constantly changing rhythmic patterns and tone colours (and not a computer in sight!).

Reich's new work *Tehillim*, however, is a *tour de force* of music notation and performance that reaches astonishing levels of power and beauty, whilst keeping up the Reich tradition of being one step ahead of contemporary trends. Comprising voices, organ, string and wind sections, and percussion, *Tehillim* is unlike Reich's previous work in as much as here is no set bar-length. Based on an ancient Hebrew text, it is the metre of the written word that forms the rhythm of the music, thus any attempt to tie down the piece to any particular time-signature is abortive.

All four parts are individual in character, the first two being *allegro*, the third slow, building to the climax of 'Part IV', making the whole almost symphonic in form. But, don't misunderstand. Although religious in essence, this is no dirge. The rhythms at times are downright danceable if

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SOUND CHECK

Cont.

you don't try to count the number of times your head hits the wall, and the first time I heard the organ feeding in, I thought I was listening to a vocal Weather Report. The exuberance of the Hallelujah finale should guarantee not a dry seat in the house.

Although not a jazz record *per se*, anyone who is prepared to listen should find *Tekilui* worthy of deep investigation. Needless to add, the Eicher production is — as always — antiseptically clear of all impurities.

Jimmy Roche

BOBBY HUTCHERSON: Solo Quartet (Contemporary 14009) Recorded: Ocean Way Recording, Hollywood — 1981 and 1982. *Side One:* 'Gotcha'; 'For You, Mom and Dad'; 'The Ice Cream Man'.

Bobby Hutcherson (vib, marimba, bs marimba, chimes, xyl, boo-bam); John Koenig (bells).

Side Two: 'La Alhambra'; 'Old Devil Moon'; 'My Foolish Heart'; 'Messina'.

Bobby Hutcherson (vib); McCoy Tyner (p); Herbie Lewis (b); Billy Higgins (d).

When there were two giants of the two previous jazz generations totally dominating your instrument, it's not easy to stand out on your own, especially when that instrument is the vibraphone and Lionel Hampton and then Milt Jackson are the giants. But, in amongst the new sounds of the horn-players, and when the drummers and bass-players of the Sixties were making their instru-

ments more melodic, Bobby Hutcherson took the vibes in the opposite direction and stood out like a bell in records of the era featuring him as sideman.

Amongst the sounds of Eric Dolphy on his classic *Out To Lunch* (Blue Note BNS 40017) and Archie Shepp on *On This Night* (Impulse AS-97), Hutcherson drops ringing, percussive, single notes and chords. Where Milt Jackson raced forth blurring the mallet beats, bringing out the piano-like qualities of the instrument, Hutcherson turned it back to a collection of individually ringing drums. But that was as a sideman. And, as a leader, he reverted to the more traditional role of the instrument, albeit keeping a flavour of his percussion accent style.

This record allows him to be his own sideman — via the medium of 24-track tape — on the solo *Side One* while giving him the very format best suited to Milt Jackson — the Modern Jazz Quartet instruments of vibes, piano, bass and drums — on the quartet *Side Two*. And, like the MJQ, the quartet is a band of peers more than a leader with his sidemen.

Haunting right through the solo side is the sound of the bass marimba (at least so I assume, not being familiar with the boo-bam) which sounds strung at first listen, but no, all the instruments are mallet instruments. So says producer John Koenig who also gets in a little mallet work himself on the bells of 'The Ice Cream Man'. But with the exception of 'For You, Mom and Dad', understatement guides the mallets. And the instruments backing the vibes (generously given a bit of solo time, too) have that old Hutcherson percussion feel — dropping in for accent but lingering rather than by their rapid repetition. This style may strike some as too slow and ponderous, and indeed even the leading vibes at times leave clear spaces, but

this is Hutcherson the percussionist showing the use of silence, or near silence, the value of accent and mood over racing over every object to be struck. Blues guitarist Buddy Guy, referring back to the days when he had to engage in killer guitar contests to be paid for the night, once commented that if you just play faster, someone will always come along who will play faster still. Instead, he said, he tried to develop a different style. Bobby Hutcherson often reminds me of that comment, and I have time to listen to the mallets pondering their various struck surfaces.

On *Side Two*, Hutcherson sticks to vibes, returns the bass to the string family and has the challenging collaboration of McCoy Tyner on piano and Billy Higgins on drums. Billy Higgins once said of Art Blakey 'as strong as he plays he always starts down there with the shading'. And shading is what Higgins is a master of. His soft caresses of snare and cymbals sets the atmosphere for Herbie Lewis' bass — sometimes too understated, or under-recorded — and the constant dialogue between Tyner and Hutcherson.

I refer elsewhere in these pages to the gushing piano style of Tyner. That bubbling river of sound that so many Coltrane innovations sailed on. Here a constant switching of roles goes on with Hutcherson. One moment sees well-spaced piano accents encouraging a racing vibes run, the next has Tyner rushing out ahead to Hutcherson accents on vibes. But even on Tyner's solos — most lyrical on the record's longest track 'Old Devil Moon' — the percussive side of Tyner is emphasised. It is almost as if the two tappers of tuned drums are supporting and cautioning, rather than trying to race or overpower each other. Like the relationship between a great singer and an equally great accompanist. Like Billie Holiday and Lester Young.

According to Koenig, this is the first time in ten years that Tyner has agreed to appear as a sideman. In fact, the collaboration between Tyner and Hutcherson is so evenly matched, it is not hard to see why he took the job.

As for Hutcherson in the quartet format, he takes over the lead often enough, but even then he lets the occasional strike ring into silence, accenting both Tyner's playing and his own. Just listen to the notes hang in the air on 'My Foolish Heart'.

I think this shows Hutcherson at his best both as leader and as sideman, and that is the role of percussionist and collaborator.

Skip Laszlo

DENNY ZEITLIN/CHARLIE HADEN: Time Remembers One Time Once (ECM 1239) Recorded: Keystone Korner, San Francisco — July 1981.

Side One: 'Chairman Man'; 'Bird Food'; 'As Long As There's Music'; 'Time Remembers One Time Once'. *Side Two:* 'Love For Sale'; 'Ellen David'; 'Satellite'; 'How High The Moon'; 'The Dolphin'. Denny Zeitlin (p); Charlie Haden (b).

GARY BURTON: Picture This (ECM 1226) Recorded: Columbia Studios, New York — January 1982.

Side One: 'Tanglewood '63'; 'Waltz'; 'Dreams So Real'. *Side Two:* 'Tierra del Fuego'; 'Duke Ellington's Sound of Love'; 'Skylight'.

Gary Burton (vib); Jim Odgren (as); Steve Swallow (b); Mike Hyman (d).

MICHAEL MANTLER: Something There (WATT 13) Recorded: Grog Kill Studio, New York — February-June 1982.

Side One & Two: 'Something There'.

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Peter King



Gary Burton

Michael Mantler (c); Carla Bley (p); Mike Stern (g); Steve Swallow (b); Nick Mason (d); Michael Gibbs (arr).

DEWEY REDMAN: The Struggle Continues (ECM 1225)

Recorded: Columbia, New York - January 1982.
Side One: 'Thren'; 'Love Is'; 'Turn Over Baby'. Side Two: 'Joie de Vivre'; 'Combinations'; 'Dewey Square'.

Dewey Redman (ts); Charles Eubanks (p); Mark Helias (b); Ed Blackwell (d).

Piano-bass duos are forever fighting a rear-guard action against the slide into the precious and the preoccupied. It's a hard wrangle to triumph in, even when one of the performers is a bassist like Charlie Haden, who is in partnership with the San Francisco pianist Denny Zeitlin. Zeitlin is constantly reminiscent of Paul Bley in his fondness for oblique, unfinished phrases and poignant, purplish chords, and the resemblance is especially strong in the up tempo delivery of Ornette Coleman's tune 'Bird Food'. Haden, a bassist of great resourcefulness, spacious sound and vibrant passions, is not really invited to attack the music in these rather quizzical variations but plays a sustained and sensuous passage on the ballad 'As Long As There's Music'. Chamber jazz - thoughtful in execution, and maybe too much so.

There was a time when anything with vibes in it was called chamber jazz, too, but you could hardly apply the expression to Gary Burton, who goes flat out for snappy tunes and even snappier playing - in a mode that rarely travels too far away from a breezy jazz-funk. Burton likes music that works on explicit chord patterns, partly because it suits the melodious, lyrical style of his improvising, and partly because he often solos in chords

himself, a trademark that gives all his music a lush, rather sugary sound. 'Tanglewood '63' is an old Mike Gibbs tune in which the chord changes are not merely plain to the ear but announced as if they were banner headlines, 'Waltz' is an airy, floating vehicle for Swallow's liquid-sounding bass-playing, and Mingus' Ellington tribute is taken much too fast. Burton's solo on the fast closing track, though, is a model of his old inventiveness. Mixed.

Mantler's record is the opposite end of the universe to Burton's glossy perambulations. A large-scale, rather ponderous venture, it features the string section of the London Symphony Orchestra. Mantler's trumpet, Carla Bley, one of Miles Davis' current guitarists Mike Stern, Nick Mason on drums, and tends to oscillate between sounding like a film-score and musical effects like shunting railway trucks, full of bumpy, truculent sounds and the brass squinting off flares of sound while Stern's guitar buzzes and wails. Though Stern mostly sounded fine on Miles' gigs here last year, he sounds muscle-bound and rather dinge-like here - the monotony of some of Mantler's grander musical concepts having been apparent on earlier ventures, too.

Simpler, more direct and infinitely more varied in scope is a straightforwardly jazzy encounter between the gritty saxophonist Dewey Redman and an excellent band that includes the great Ed Blackwell on drums. A fast, hard, vigorous player, Redman echoes Rollins, Coltrane and Ornette Coleman in his solos, and he's admirably buoyed up by the inventiveness of Eubanks, who in turn complements Blackwell in his fondness for percussive chords. Redman is unafraid of space. On 'Love Is', he delivers a solo of smears, silences, soft, burry sounds. On 'Turn Over Baby', he takes to r&b. An excellent record. **John Fordham**

CECIL TAYLOR: Garden (hat Art 1993/94)

Recorded: Grosser Saal Volkshaus Basel, Switzerland - 16th November, 1981.

Side One: 'Ellel'. Side Two: 'Garden II'. Side Three: 'Garden I'; 'Stepping On Stars'. Side Four: 'Introduction to Z'; 'Driver Says'; 'Pemmican'; 'Points'. Cecil Taylor (p).

ANTHONY BRAXTON

(featuring Richard Teitelbaum): Open Aspects '82 (hat Art 1995/96)

Recorded: Tonstudio Bauer, Ludwigsburg, Germany - 18th March, 1982.

Side One: '3'; '1.2'. Side Two: '2'; '4'. Side Three: '5'; '6.1'; '6.2'; '6.3'. Side Four: '1.1'. Anthony Braxton (as, soprano); Richard Teitelbaum (Moog, micro-computer).

CATALOGUE: Penetration (hat Art 1997/98)

Recorded: Brasserie Birscherhof, Basel, Switzerland - 16th & 17th April, 1982.

Side One: 'Khomeiny Twist'; 'De-risoir'; 'Penetration'. Side Two: 'Stop Stress'; 'Ultim Arlene'; 'The End'. Side Three: 'Orphelina'; 'Demnachet Mon Amour'. Side Four: 'Khomeiny Twist No 2'; 'Absolution'. Jacques Berrocal (corn, gong, flts, voc); Jean-Francois Pavros (g, b, p, voc, harm); Gilbert Artman (d, org, p).

What are the reasons behind the setting up of record labels? Are they merely the products of whim, or a slightly precarious move towards making a few bob? Whatever, one thing is certain; that those companies geared towards jazz inadvertently reflect the status of the music in their respective countries.

Given that jazz in Britain is prone to wearing its 'esoteric' label like a ball and chain, it is to Europe with its relatively thriving

scene that one turns in search of those companies who made a habit of actively pursuing and capturing the continuing development of the music.

Manfred Eicher's ECM label (see John Fordham's reviews) is impossible to ignore in this assessment, for here the seeds of optimistic marketing were sown; the use of virgin vinyl, stylistic sleeves and deluxe recording quality now considered to be their trademarks. What spoils Eicher's otherwise praiseworthy attention to detail was the rigid house-style emanating from his oppressive, personalised production technique; one capable of reducing music to a common and often irritating blandness.

Not so with hat Hut, Werner Uehlinger's Swiss-based operation which is clearly identifiable as being a product of Eicher's trail-blazing. Beginning with a clutch of releases from saxophonist Joe McPhee, the label quickly developed its own style of presentation. Pastel sleeve designs of a searching if slightly infantile nature gave the albums a degree of unity, all important to the label taking a hold in the market-place. But, unlike ECM, hat Hut was careful to avoid a house-style which encroached on the idiosyncrasies of the musicians attracted to its roster.

Bonding the label's diverse outpourings is an emphasis on unadulterated avant-garde techniques derived initially from jazz. The inclusion of French band Catalogue, however, serves to indicate that the boundaries of hat Hut's concern could, in fact, be expanding.

Adhering to such a loose musical pretext can, of course, be fraught with danger: you don't have to dig too far into the back-catalogue to discover some of the more spotty inclusions. Yet these three releases on hat Art (Uehlinger's lavish, up-market subsidiary) achieve a consistently

Cont. on Page 36



Dewey Redman



Anthony Braxton



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SOUND CHECK

Cont.

high standard; individually and collectively hitting on new musical directions.

It is precisely this coupling of meticulous presentation and artistic freedom that makes *Garden* Cecil Taylor's definitive solo waxing; four sides given over to his ever-developing piano vocabulary. The Taylor trademarks are, of course, very much in evidence – the dark, stabbing note clusters and the rippling sea of sound produced by his quick-witted finger action over the entire length of keyboard. Yet *Garden* has essentially magnified both his predilection towards the classical avant-garde (Cage in particular) and the self-contained nature of his solo playing (one given more to call-and-response) as opposed to the energy-conducting role assumed by his use of the instrument in ensemble work.

Like Taylor, saxophonist Braxton has recorded work scattered on labels worldwide. For me, he has always excelled more

in free improvisation and *Open Aspects* '82 certainly stands as one of his finer achievements; suitably devoid of the toothsome theories which often adorn his graphic compositions. In tandem here with electronics exponent Teitelbaum, Braxton's playing is characteristically self-assured, searching and mellifluous. Surprisingly, however – given that his credit is embedded in the small print – it is Teitelbaum who makes most of the occasion. His electronics assume a variety of roles; supportive, imitative and suggestive, thereby allowing Teitelbaum not only to instigate lines of development, but also to act as a sound mirror to Braxton's alto and soprano work. The results of this empathy between both musicians account for the diversity of moods, ranging from symphonic sweetness to abrasive industrialised sounds.

If the Braxton and Taylor albums demonstrate art's concern with progressive tendencies in jazz, then Catalogue's *Penetration* points towards possible redefinition of their scope. With the label's accent on free-music, it proves a natural consequence, given that improvisation is not cradled by one musical area. Rather it transcends style; unique in its capacity to cross musical boundaries. Catalogue has little

connection with jazz in any shape or form; their over-riding influence (if there is one) being rock music. Possessed of a stark aggressiveness, they are a loud, egotistical outfit whose collective spontaneous compositions jumble forms, yet never lapse into ambiguities. 'The End' constitutes the album's most powerful statement with Berrocal donning an electrically modified cornet and carving out a mock rendition of 'Strangers In Paradise' whilst all hell lets loose around him. Elsewhere Pavours sends waves of controlled guitar feedback to adorn the powerhouse drumming of Artman and Berrocal's extraneous vocal sounds. At its most whimsical, Catalogue ape the stereotyped postures of Western rock music (the heavy-metal axe-hero, the screaming banshee etc). Yet their stance is perhaps more serious, serving as proof that the musical culture of the West's modern generation still has avenues yet to be explored. A masterpiece.

David Ilic

EMILY REMLER: Take Two (Concord Jazz CJ-195)
Recorded: Soundmixers, New York – June 1982.

Side One: 'Cannonball'; 'In Your Own Sweet Way'; 'For Regulars Only'; 'Search For Peace'. *Side Two:* 'Pocket West'; 'Waltz For My Grandfather'; 'Afro Blue'; 'Eleuthera'.

Emily Remler (g); James Williams (p); Don Thompson (b); Terry Clarke (d).

Having reviewed the Emily Remler debut album *Firefly* in *Wire* uno, I will not go too deeply into background except to say that Ms Remler is, at 25, a well-respected (and connected, being admired by Kessel-Ellis-Byrd-Farlow etc) jazz guitarist.

That record showed great promise and this has been borne out on *Take Two*. All the influences mentioned before (Wes, Martino) et al are still here, being elementary to the evolutionary development of an original Remler approach. This time, however, the musicians have more of a group feel. The rhythm section – pianist James Williams (Blakey, Stitt, Milt, Terry and the latest Tal Farlow album), Canadian bassist Don Thompson (George Shearing duo) and drummer Terry Clarke – are not satisfied merely to provide a backdrop for Remler's intricate solo flights.

The material stems from Brubeck, Tyner, Cannonball, Monty Alexander and Dexter Gordon, and provides considerable scope for improvisations of varying moods and tempi, not just for herself but also the talented Williams. Two originals

– 'Pocket West' and 'Waltz For My Grandfather' – allow the lady to be, in turn, both forceful and delicate. She often uses her right-hand fingers to effect in her chord work, but features them in her own finger-style arrangement of Mongo Santamaría's 'Afro Blue' (and very nice, too) [poem].

Take Two shows that Emily Remler did not blow all her best shots on *Firefly* and, when she is in a position to carry her own band with all the advantages (and headaches) that can bring, I think a major explosion could be round the corner.

Jimmy Roche

TANIA MARIA: Come With Me (Concord Jazz Picante CJP-200)

Recorded: Coast Records, San Francisco – August 1982.

Side One: 'Sangria'; 'Embraceable You'; 'Lost in Amazonia'; 'Come With Me'. *Side Two:* 'Sementes, Graines and Seeds'; 'Nega'; 'Euzinha'; 'It's All Over Now'.

Tania Maria (p, kbds, voc); Eddie Duran and Jose Neto (g); Lincoln Gouines and John Pena (cl b); Portinho (d, perc); Steve Thornton (perc).

Come With Me is Tania Maria's welcome third offering for Concord, a label to be congratulated for its efforts towards Equal Opportunities, giving talented young women (notably, Emily Remler) a piece of the studio action. Concord is probably most famous for its heavyweight stable of jazz-guitar greats. Here, though, guitarists Duran (ex-Parker, Getz, Shearing, Norvo – an expert 'traditionalist') and Neto (a rhythmic Latin fireball) play a supporting role to Tania Maria's sizzling and sultry keyboard-style.

'Sangria' provides a spirited salsa opener, and her fascinating combination of unexpected chords makes for compulsive, repeated listening. She's at her finest on uptempo Latin numbers, recreating the buzz of her native Brazil with originality and energy.

I'm doubtful about her straight vocal renditions of Gershwin's 'Embraceable You' (the only non-original) and her ballad 'It's All Over Now'. I wish I could agree with the sleeve-note writer's enthusiastic comparison with Anita O'Day (a lady I much admire). Tania Maria scores when she uses her wordless vocals as added, effective percussion – scattering and punctuating her excellent band's racy rhythms, as on 'Sementes'.

'Come With Me' reveals the seductive, funky, individualistic style which has made her something of an underground

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phenomenon in the more intelligent and discerning discs (oh yes – there are a few). If comparisons have to be made, I'd put her piano-work in a class with the underrated and multi-talented Patrice Rushen – both having similar rolling and tumbling jazz-piano styles.

To appreciate the fire of Tania Maria is to see her in live performance. Tense and highly strung, the charismatic Tania Maria defies all seemingly limitless adrenalin, creating a high-pitched emotionalism.

Don't dismiss Tania Maria for being a fusion-chart hit. She deserves some credit – and I don't care who gives it – for her scintillating musicianship, inventive composition and a personalised keyboard touch that's much needed on the clichéd piano circuit. You'll hear no re-hashed Jarrett, Hancock, Corea or Evans – just Tania Maria herself and that, these days, is rare.

I think Tania Maria is sensational. Buy it. **Chrissie Murray**

ART BLAKEY AND THE JAZZ MESSENGERS: Keystone 3 (Concord Jazz CJ-196)

Recorded: Keystone Korner, San Francisco – January 1982.

Side One: 'In Walked Bud'; 'In A Sentimental Mood'; 'Fuller Love'. *Side Two:* 'Waterfalls'; 'A La Mode'.

Art Blakey (d); Donald Brown (p); Charles Fambrough (b); Brandford Marsalis (as); Wynton Marsalis (tp); Bill Pierce (ts).

No, I didn't make a mistake about the order of the players on this date; that's the way it is on the sleeve (alphabetically actually), although, no doubt in ten years time if all goes according to a lot of people's expectations, the re-issue will read 'WYNTON MARSALIS ... featuring art blakey'. The rewriting of jazz history is a constantly unfolding occupation but there are some musicians whose mark is too indelible to erase and, in my book, Art Blakey is one of them. What's more, as is evident on this session, he keeps pumping life into his legacy.

Blakey, like his counterpart Charles Mingus, is more than an influential player of his instrument. His bands are schools both sending out new legends and drawing in the talents of great contemporaries. And, as many a drummer emerging since will tell you, his influence stretches beyond those apostles who got the message as a Jazz Messenger. Since the Jazz Messengers was established in 1954, the group has ushered forth the likes of Freddie Hubbard, Jackie McLean and Randy Weston. Horace Silver

and Thelonious Monk (whose 'In Walked Bud' kicks off this record) have headlined with the various bands – not to mention setting the percussive piano pattern on the Messenger style.

With a history like this it may be tempting, if not hard, not to sit back on your laurels and just appear. But all those years have honed Blakey, too, and here he appears in all roles: driving frontline drummer, master of understatement hinting at the changes as he quietly and unobtrusively slides under his soloists as they take healthy turns in the limelight, and convoy leader driving his team through winding mountain passages.

There is a number of vehicles for the other Messengers, but if you listen over and over, it is Blakey who stands out. Sometimes his presence is so subtle – as on 'In A Sentimental Mood' – it's hardly there. But when the band is in full swing a drum roll here, a sudden accent on the bass drum or a take off on the cymbals prefaces a change of mood or accent, a player coming in or going out. 'Fuller Love' shows this in particular, even though it contains plenty of solo time.

Wynton's brother Branford has his time on alto, but is overshadowed by Wynton and the tenor of Bill Pierce. Wynton Marsalis is at his best on the longest track, 'Waterfalls' while 'In A Sentimental Mood' is almost entirely given over to the tenor of Bill Pierce. Followed as it does from the driving, percussive 'In Walked Bud', the Ellington ballad demonstrates the band's range of moods, which, in turn, are welded together on the longer tracks of Side Two.

Charles Fambrough, although given solo time on 'A La Mode', is more noticeable in combination with Blakey or pianist Donald Brown. There is a passage at the end of 'Waterfalls' where the Mingus-style playing of Fambrough bounces so rhythmically off a Brown solo, it's hard to call it either's solo. Brown, too, converses throughout with Blakey, loyally performing Monk's tune in the late master's style but gushing forth like McCoy Tyner on 'Fuller Love'. (I should say here that the mixing and recording quality are well geared to the rhythmic subtleties, something many live recordings fail at badly.)

Like Jazz Messenger bands before, this is a band that combines well – especially in the rhythm section – gives generous solo time but always oozes Blakey. Even when Blakey moves aside to let other members of the convoy rush into the lead, the road signs are his and he has mapped the route. **Skip Lazzlo**

Other New Releases In Brief ...

Arthur Blythe: *Elaborations*, 1982 (Columbia FC 38163). Excellent offering from one of the most original and inventive quintets around today. Features Abdul Wadud (cello), Bob Stewart (tuba) and Kelvin Bell (g).

Ron Carter: *Etudes*, 1982 (Elektra Musician UK:E 0214). Carter's somewhat idiosyncratic and occasionally ponderous works sympathetically treated by Bill Evans (the reedsman), Art Farmer and Tony Williams.

Al Cohn: *Overtones*, 1982 (Concord CJ-194). Straight-ahead bebop. Four Cohn originals and others nicely done. Good contribution from son Joe on guitar.

Ornette Coleman: *Who's Crazy?*, 1965 (Affinity D102). Re-issue of historic earlier session for Bethlehem with David Izenson (bass) and Charles Moffatt (drums); Ornette making the pace with alto, violin and trumpet.

Concord Jazz All Stars: *At The Northsea Jazz Festival Vol II*, 1981: (Concord CJ-205). Lively bash featuring Al Cohn, Scott Hamilton, Warren Vache et al – mostly standards.

Chris Connor/Carmen McRae:

I Hear Music, 1954-55 (Affinity AFF 97). Interesting early sessions from vocalists McRae and Connor with small line-ups. Features Herbie Mann, Tony Scott, Kai Winding, JJ Johnson.

Chick Corea: *La Fiesta*, 1978 (Happybird B 90061). Curious duplication of Kingdom Jazz's *Chick & Leland Live At Mudem* (1981 issue). Here, Lionel Hampton's contribution is uncredited! Buy the Kingdom Jazz version.

Chick Corea: *Trio Music*, 1981 (ECM 1232-33). Featuring Miroslav Vitous and Roy Haynes. Record One – enthralling trio improvisations; Record Two – individualistic treatment of Monk's music.

Kevin Eubanks: *Gustaf*, 1982 (Elektra Musician UK:E 0213). Producer Mike Gibbs and the Eubanks family rally round for Kevin's debut album. Fine – bop and originals, marred only by lack-lustre reproduction.

Bill Evans: *The Paris Concert – Edition One*, 1979 (Elektra Musician UK:E 0164). Welcome, previously unissued recordings from French radio concert with bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joe LaBarbera.

Gil Evans: *Princess*, 1977 (Antilles AN 1010). Altoist David Sanborn magnificent on this other-

Cont on Page 38

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wise motley collection of Evan's arrangements. Includes reedsman George Adams, Arthur Blythe, trumpeters Lew Soloff and Marvin 'Hannibal' Peterson, trombonist Jimmy Knepper and drummer Susan Evans. Duff live recording, nevertheless...

Everyman Band, 1982 (ECM 1234). Good originals in the jazz-rock vein from drummer Michael Suchorsky's band with guitarist David Torn - an outfit deserving further investigation.

Tai Farrow: 'Cooking' On All Burners, 1982 (Concord CH-204). Brain-blurring runs and technique from a true and influential guitar giant. Featuring upcoming ex-Blakey pianist James Williams.

Jan Garbarek: 'Paths, Prints, 1981 (ECM 1223). Beautiful, atmospheric Euro-folk-jazz - notably 'Kite Dance' - from the ever-refreshing Garbarek. Featuring Bill Frisell (guitar), Eberhard Weber (bass) and Jon Christensen (drums).

Stan Getz/Paul Horn/Joel Farrell/Sugar Blue/Gayle Moran: 'Jazz Gala '80' (Kingdom Jazz Gate 7009-10). Great names in low-key jams at the Midem junket 1980. Interesting inclusion of harp-player Sugar Blue, apart from that...

John McLaughlin: 'Music Spoken Here', 1982 (WEA 99254). For enthusiasts only. The early McLaughlin fire flickers but only just. Interesting inclusion of Egberto Gismonti's 'Loro'. Featuring classical pianist Katia Labeque, but keyboardist François Couturier is the one who cuts it. The drummer is the fine Tommy Campbell.

Marty Paich Big Band: 'The New York Scene, 1959' (Discovery DS-844). A stunner - Paich arrangements of show standards done full justice by Scott Lefaro, Jimmy Giuffrè, Stu Williamson, Mel Lewis, Vic Feldman, Art Pepper et al. Remarkable version of 'April in Paris'. Outstanding.

Chrissie Murray

FESTIVE SEASON

FREDDIE HUBBARD, Herbie Hancock, Jaco Pastorius, Charles Lloyd, Lionel Hampton and Woody Herman are among the big names provisionally booked for George Wein's European festival circuit which kicks off in July.

The line-up for Montauban (5th-9th July) includes the Illinois Jacquet Orchestra featuring Arnett Cobb, the Lionel Hampton Orchestra, Carrie Smith, Jimmy Witherspoon, Stephane Grappelli and Cleanhead Vinson.

Montreux (8th-24th July) - Jaco Pastorius, Herbie Hancock, Charles Lloyd, Dollar Brand, Ernie Wilkins Almost Big Band, Dizzie Gillespie, Jay McShann, Big Joe Turner, Chick Corea, Gary Burton, Oscar Peterson, Ella Fitzgerald, Joe Pass, Al Jarreau, gossellers Stars of Faith and the Barrett Sisters, blues with Buddy Guy, Albert King, Johnny Copeland and Taj Mahal. Providing the funk element - Lee Ritenour, the Neville Brothers and Pieces of a Dream.

Nice (9th-19th July) - Freddie Hubbard (with Lew Tabackin, Eddie Gomez and Joanne Brackeen), Lionel Hampton, Buddy Guy, Paquito D'Rivera, Ritchie Cole, Sphere (Rouse, Barron, Williams, Riley), Woody Herman, Corea-Burton, Dizzy, Clark Terry, Sweets Edison, John Faddis, Lockjaw Davis, Buddy Tate, Arnett Cobb, James Moody, Johnny Griffin, Cleanhead Vinson, Ray Bryant, John Lewis, Slam Stewart, Major Holley, Oliver Jackson, Bally Hart, Jimmy Witherspoon, Bob Wilber's Bechet Legacy, Big Joe Turner, Larry Coryell and Al Casey.

David Balfry Tours is arranging packages to all three festivals - details from 66 Tiddington Road, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 7BA.

LETTERS

We welcome letters from readers - either criticising or flattering. If you have a burning point of view about *The Wire's* content, or, indeed, any of the issues surrounding jazz, we'd be pleased to give you space on this page.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Meanwhile, a selection from the latest postbag...

We reserve the right to shorten letters if necessary.

Terrific jazz magazine.

I hold a completely opposite view to John Fordham's comments on Freddie Hubbard's album *Outpost* in which he more or less said it wasn't worth listening to.

I know that *Outpost* is a definitive statement on the direction of jazz trumpet and, I believe, on the direction of jazz itself. For Clifford's sake listen to it!

How about a space for musicians to advertise in? I have been practising for two years. I have no formal music education, no musical contacts and am too inexperienced to 'sit in' but I want to form a band. Can you help people like me who otherwise rely on MM (rock paper) or a hopeful card in a record shop?

Jason

In response to many musicians' suggestion for a column in which to advertise, from the next issue The Wire will be including a Classified Section featuring Musicians' Contacts (see page 29). It would have helped, Jason, if you'd told us what instrument you play and also included your address. Do we suspect trumpet from the statement about Hubbard? Any readers wishing to contact Jason, write to The Wire and we'll pass on your letters. But please send us your address, Jason.

Ed

Thanks for issue No 2 - it was even better than the first *Wire*.

The profile on Phil Seamen was beautiful and captured the character as we all knew him. Would it be too much to ask for a similar on the great late Tubby?

Dave Trett, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

A tribute to Tubby Hayes is coming along The Wire for inclusion in a future issue.

Ed

I comment on issue 2 as follows: *Interesting* - Sonny Stitt, Slim Gaillard, Seven Steps to Jazz, Charles Mingus, festival photos, Phil Seamen, Dolphy discography, Affinity Records, Soundcheck, Letters.

Uninteresting - Ganelin Trio, Keith Tippett, Carla Bley, Keith Jarrett, Rip Rig & Panic, John Stevens.

I think it would be very risky if a magazine operating in the already specialised area of jazz were to limit its horizons even more by concentrating on the fringes of jazz (eg rock-jazz, free-jazz etc). It is fashionable among some people to exaggerate the importance of these areas out of all proportion to the other 99 per cent of sixty-plus years of jazz history. In my experience (limited, I grant you) musicians themselves are the most blinkered, probably because of their greater dedication.

Keith Long, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands

The editorial policy statement in Issue 1 still holds good for The Wire as far as we're concerned. That is 'The Wire's brief will be to cover the field of contemporary music, jazz and improvised music... The Wire's sub-title has been left deliberately ambiguous to allow for the unexpected. I have never believed in unnecessary classifications and labels, and The Wire's perimeter will be as wide as is necessary to embrace its stated intentions... But thanks for your comments, anyway. We hope that if you continue reading The Wire your 'cons' will disappear.

Ed

I have recently bought my first copy of *The Wire* (Issue Two). May I first applaud your courage (madness?) in this venture and wish it every success.

Generally, I am very impressed with the magazine: an informative Eric Dolphy discography, predictably excellent Charles Fox, and nice to have record reviews relevant to 1983 instead of 1883!

Two complaints: first, the liberal sprinkling of obscenities. These add nothing to one's critical appreciation of the music - they are unnecessary and offensive, and smack of trendy late Sixties' student mags written by those who have just read their first D H Lawrence.

Second, can no-one teach Brian Case to write in English?

These gripes apart, though, an excellent 85p's worth - I will be amazed if you can keep the price so low.

Must finish now as I'm dashing off to burn all my ****

Good luck.

J B Downing, Basildon, Essex

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